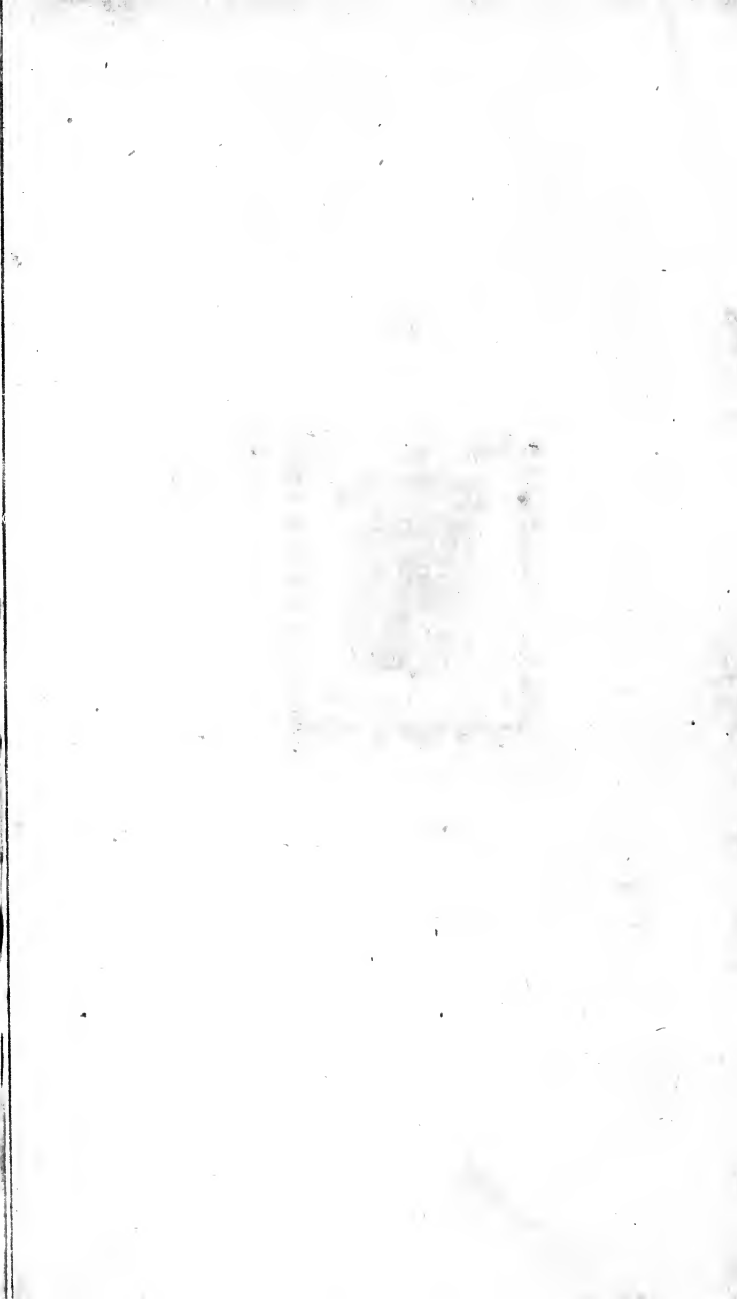
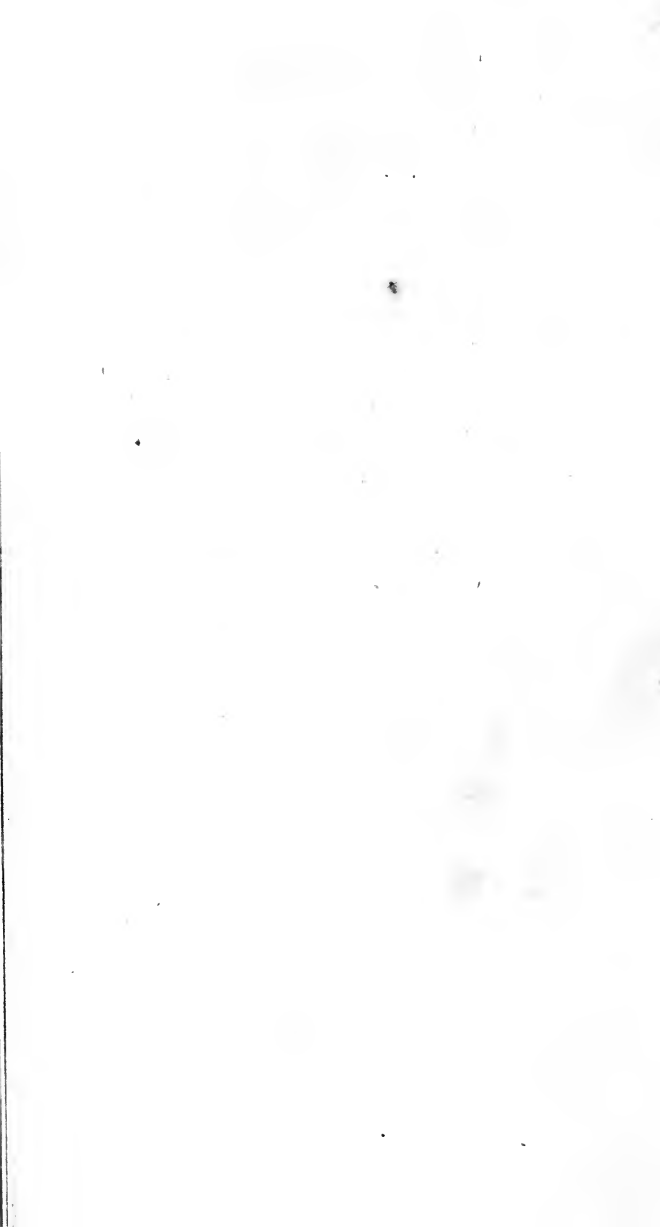


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THE SPY;
A TALE OF
THE NEUTRAL GROUND;

REFERRING TO
SOME PARTICULAR OCCURRENCES
DURING
THE AMERICAN WAR:
ALSO PORTRAYING
AMERICAN SCENERY AND MANNERS.

“ Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself had said,
This is my own, my native land ?”—

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE SPY.

CHAPTER I.

This fairy form contains a soul as mighty
As that which lives within a giant's frame;
These slender limbs, that tremble like the aspen
At summer evening's sigh, uphold a spirit,
Which, rous'd, can tower to the height of heaven,
And light those shining windows of the face
With much of heaven's own radiance.

Duo.

THE number and character of Miss Jeannette Peyton's guests had greatly added to her cares. The morning had found them all restored, in some measure, to their former ease of body, with the exception of the youthful captain of dragoons, who had been so deeply regretted by Dunwoodie. The wound of this officer was severe, though the surgeon persevered in saying that it was without danger. His

comrade, we have shown, had deserted his couch; and Henry Wharton awoke from a sleep that had been undisturbed by any thing but a dream of suffering amputation under the hands of a surgical novice. As it proved, however, to be nothing but a dream, the youth found himself much refreshed by his slumbers; and Dr. Sitgreaves removed all further apprehensions, by confidently pronouncing him a well man within a fortnight.

During all this time Colonel Wellmere had not made his appearance; he breakfasted in his own room, and, notwithstanding certain significant smiles of the man of science, declared himself too much injured to rise from his bed. Leaving him, therefore, endeavouring to conceal his chagrin in the solitude of his chamber, the surgeon proceeded to the more grateful task of sitting an hour by the bedside of George Singleton. A slight flush was on the face of the patient as the doctor entered the room, and he advanced promptly, and laid his fingers on the pulse of the

youth, beckoning him to be silent, while he filled the vacuum in the discourse, by saying—

“ Growing symptoms of a febrile pulse—no—no, my dear George, you must remain quiet and dumb; though your eyes look better, and your skin has even a moisture.”

“ Nay, my dear Sitgreaves,” said the youth, taking his hand, “ you see there is no fever about me—look, is there any of Jack Lawton’s hoar frost on my tongue?”

“ No, indeed,” said the surgeon, clapping a spoon in the mouth of the other, forcing it open, and looking down his throat, as if he was disposed to visit his interior in person; “ your tongue is well, and your pulse begins to lower again. Ah! the bleeding did you good. Phlebotomy is a sovereign specific for southern constitutions. But that mad-cap Lawton obstinately refused to be blooded for a fall he had from his horse last night. Why, George, your case is becoming singular,” continued the doctor, instinctively throw-

ing aside his wig ; “ your pulse even and soft, your skin moist, but your eye fiery, and cheek flushed. Oh ! I must examine more closely into these symptoms.”

“ Softly, my good friend, softly,” said the youth, falling back on his pillow, and losing some of that colour which alarmed his companion ; “ I believe in extracting the ball you did for me all that is required. I am free from pain, and only weak, I do assure you.”

“ Captain Singleton,” said the surgeon with heat, “ it is presumptuous in you to pretend to tell your medical attendant when you are free from pain ; if it be not to enable us to decide in such matters, of what avails the lights of science ? for shame, George, for shame ; even that perverse fellow, John Lawton, could not behave with more obstinacy.”

His patient smiled as he gently repulsed his physician in an attempt to undo the bandages, and with a returning glow to his cheeks, inquired—

“ Do, Archibald,” a term of endearment

that seldom failed to soften the operator's heart, "tell me what spirit from heaven has been gliding around my apartment, while I lay pretending to sleep, but a few minutes before you entered."

"If any one interferes with my patients," cried the doctor, hastily, "I will teach them, spirit or no spirit, what it is to meddle with another man's concerns."

"Tut—my dear fellow," replied the wounded man with a faint smile, "there was no interference made, nor any intended; see," exhibiting the bandages, "every thing is as you left it—but it glided about the room with the grace of a fairy, and the tenderness of an angel."

The surgeon having satisfied himself that every thing was as he had left it, very deliberately resumed his seat, and replaced his wig, as he inquired, with a brevity that would have honoured Lieutenant Mason—

"Had it petticoats, George?"

"I saw nothing but its heavenly eyes—its bloom—its majestic step—its grace;" replied the young man, with rather more

ardor than his surgeon thought consistent with his debilitated condition, and he laid his hand on his mouth, to stop him ; saying himself—

“ It must have been Miss Jeannette Peyton—a lady of fine accomplishments, with—with—hem—with something of the kind of step you speak of—a very complacent eye ; and as to the bloom, I dare say offices of charity can summon as fine a colour to her cheeks, as glows in the faces of her more youthful nieces.”

“ Nieces !” said the invalid ; “ has she nieces then ? Oh, the angel I saw may be a daughter, a sister, or a niece, but never an aunt.”

“ Hush, George, hush, your talking has brought your pulse up again ; you must observe quiet, and prepare for a meeting with your own sister, who will be here within an hour.”

“ What, Isabella ! and who sent for her ?”

“ The major,” said the surgeon drily.

“ Kind, considerate Dunwoodie,” murmured the exhausted youth, sinking again

on his pillow ; where the commands of his attendant compelled him to continue in silence.

Even Captain Lawton had been received with many and courteous inquiries after the state of his health, from all the members of the family when he made his morning entrance ; but an invisible spirit presided over the comforts of the English colonel. Sarah had shrunk with retiring delicacy from entering the room ; yet she knew the position of every glass, and had, with her own hands, supplied the contents of every bowl, that stood on his well-furnished table.

At the time of which we write we were a divided people, and Sarah thought it was no more than her right to cherish the institutions of that country to which she yet clung as the land of her forefathers : but there were other and more cogent reasons for the silent preference she was giving to the Englishman. His image had first filled the void in her youthful fancy, and it was an image that was distinguished by

many of those attractions that can enchain a female heart. It is true, he wanted the graceful and lofty stature of Peyton Dunwoodie, his commanding brow, his speaking eye, and his clear and comprehensive diction ; but his skin was fair, his cheeks coloured, and his teeth no less white than those which shone in the fascinating smile of the young Virginian. Sarah had moved round the house during the morning, casting frequent and longing glances at the door of Wellmere's apartment, anxious to learn the condition of his wounds, and yet ashamed to inquire ; conscious interest kept her tongue tied, until her sister, with the frankness of innocence, had put the desired question to Dr. Sitgreaves.

"Colonel Wellmere," said the operator gravely, "is in what I call a state of free-will, madam. He is ill, or he is well, as he pleases ; his case, young lady, exceeds my art to heal ; and, I take it, Sir Henry Clinton is the best adviser he can apply to : though Major Dunwoodie has made the communication with his leech rather difficult."

Frances smiled archly, but averted her face to do so, while Sarah moved haughtily, and with the stately grace of an offended Juno, from the apartment. Her own room, however, afforded her but little to relieve her thoughts, and, in passing through the long gallery that communicated with each of the chambers of the building, she noticed the door of Singleton's room to be open. The wounded youth seemed sleeping, and was alone. Sarah ventured lightly into the apartment, and busied herself for a few minutes in arranging the tables, and nourishment provided for the patient, hardly conscious of what she was doing, and possibly dreaming that it was done for another. The natural bloom of her cheek was heightened by the insinuation of the surgeon, and the lustre of her eye was by no means diminished from the same cause. The sound of the approaching footsteps of Sitgreaves had hastened her retreat through another door, and down a private stair-way to the side of her sister.

Together they sought the fresh air on the piazza to the cottage, and they pursued their walk, arm in arm, holding the following dialogue :—

“ There is something disagreeable about this surgeon, Dunwoodie has honoured us with,” said Sarah, “ that causes me to wish him away, most heartily.”

Frances fixed her laughing eyes on her sister, who, meeting their playful glance as they turned in their walk, blushed yet deeper than before as she added hastily ; “ but I forget he is one of this renowned corps of Virginians, and as such must be spoken reverently of.”

“ As respectfully as you please, my dear sister,” returned Frances mildly ; “ there is but little danger of your exceeding the truth.”

“ Not in your opinion,” said the elder, with a little warmth ; “ but I think Mr. Dunwoodie has taken a liberty that exceeds the rights of consanguinity ; he has made our father’s house an hospital.”

“ We ought to be grateful,” replied the younger in a low voice, “ that none of the patients it contains are dearer to us.”

“ Your brother is one,” said Sarah laconically.

“ True, true,” interrupted Frances hastily, and blushing to the eyes; “ but he leaves his room, and thinks his wound lightly purchased by the pleasure of being with his friends—if,” she added with a tremulous lip, “ this dreadful suspicion that is affixed to his visit were removed, I could feel his wound as nothing.”

“ You now have the fruits of rebellion brought home to you,” said Sarah, moving across the piazza with something more than her ordinary stateliness; “ a brother wounded and a prisoner, and perhaps a victim; your father distressed, his privacy interrupted, and not improbably his estates torn from him on account of his loyalty to his king.”

Frances continued her walk in silence. While facing the northern entrance to the vale, her eye was uniformly fastened on

the point where the road was suddenly lost by the intervention of a hill ; and at each turn, as she lost sight of the spot, she lingered until an impatient movement of her sister quickened her pace to an even motion with that of the other. At length, a single-horse chaise was seen making its way carefully among the stones, which lay scattered over the country road that wound through the valley, and approached the cottage. Frances lost her brilliancy of colour as the vehicle gradually drew nigher ; and when she was enabled to see a female form in it by the side of a liveried black, who held the reins, her limbs shook with an agitation that compelled her to lean on Sarah for support. In a few minutes the travellers approached the gate, and it was thrown open by a dragoon who had followed the carriage, and who had been the messenger despatched by Dunwoodie to the father of Captain Singleton. Miss Peyton advanced to receive their guest, and the sisters united in giving her the kindest welcome ; still Frances could

with difficulty withdraw her truant eyes from reading the countenance of the visitor. She was young; of a light and fragile form, yet of exquisite proportions; but it was in her eye that her greatest charm existed; it was large, full, black, piercing, and at times a little wild. Her hair was luxuriant, and without the powder it was then the fashion to wear, but shown in its own, glossy, raven, blackness. A few of its locks had fallen on her cheek, giving its chilling whiteness by the contrast yet a more deadly character. Dr. Sitgreaves supported her from the chaise, and when she gained the floor of the piazza, she turned her expressive eye on the face of the practitioner in silence; but it spoke all that she wished to say—

“Your brother is out of danger, and wishes to see you, Miss Singleton,” said the surgeon in reply to her look.

For an instant the lady clasped her hands with energy, rolled her dark eyes to heaven, while a slight flush, like the last reflected tinge of the setting-sun, beamed

on her features, and she gave vent to her feelings in a flood of tears. Frances had stood contemplating the action and face of Isabella with a kind of uneasy admiration, but she now sprang to her side with the ardor of a sister, and kindly drawing her arm in her own, led the way to a retired room. The movement was so ingenuous, so considerate, and so delicate, that even Miss Peyton withheld her interference, following the youthful pair with only her eyes and a smile of complacency. The feeling was communicated to all the spectators, and they dispersed in pursuit of their usual avocations. Isabella yielded to the gentle influence of Frances without resistance, and having gained the room where the latter conducted her, wept in silence on the shoulder of the observant and soothing maiden, until Frances thought her tears exceeded the emotion natural to the occasion. The sobs of Miss Singleton for a time were violent and uncontrollable, until with an evident exertion she yielded to a kind observation of her companion, and

succeeded in suppressing her tears : raising her face to the eyes of Frances, she rose, while a smile of beautiful radiance passed over her features, made a hasty apology for the excess of her emotion, and desired to be conducted to the room of her brother.

The meeting between the brother and sister was warm, but, by an effort on the part of the lady, more composed than her previous agitation had given reason to expect. Isabella found her brother looking better, and in less danger than her sensitive imagination had led her to suppose, and her spirits rose in proportion ; from despondency she passed to something like gaiety ; her beautiful eyes sparkled with renovated brilliancy, and her face was lighted with smiles so fascinating, that Frances, who, in compliance with her earnest entreaties, had accompanied her to the sick chamber, sat gazing on a countenance that possessed such wonderful variability, as if impelled by a charm that was beyond her control. The youth had thrown

an earnest look at Frances as soon as his sister had raised herself from his arms, and perhaps it was the first glance at the lovely lineaments of the maiden, where the gazer turned his eyes from the view in disappointment; pausing a moment, during which the wandering eyes of Singleton were bent on the open door of the room, he said, as he took the hand of his sister, affectionately—

“ And where is Dunwoodie, Isabella ? he is never weary of kind actions. After a day of such service as that of yesterday, he has spent the night in bringing me a nurse, whose presence alone is able to raise me from my couch.”

The expression of the lady's countenance changed instantly ; her eye roved round the apartment with a character of wildness in it that repelled the anxious maiden, who studied her movements with intensity of interest, as forcibly as the moment before it had attracted her ; while the sister answered with a trembling emotion—

“ Dunwoodie ! is he then not here ? with

me he has not been : I thought to have met him by the side of my brother's bed."

"He has duties that require his presence elsewhere ; yes, these English are said to be out by the way of the Hudson, and give the light troops but little rest," said the brother musing ; "surely nothing else could have kept him so long from a wounded friend ; but, Isabella, the meeting has been too much for you ; you tremble like an aspen."

Isabella made no reply, but stretched forth her hand towards the table which held the nourishment of the captain, and the attentive Frances comprehended her wishes in a moment ; a glass of water in some measure revived the sister, who, smiling faintly, was enabled to say—

"Doubtless it is his duty. 'Twas said above, a royal party was moving on the river ; though I passed the troops but a short two miles from this spot." The latter part of the sentence was hardly audible, and spoken more in the manner of a soliloquy than as if intended for the ears of her companions.

“ On the march, Isabella ?” eagerly inquired her brother.

“ No, dismounted, and seemingly at rest,” was the reply, in the same abstracted manner as before.

The wondering brother turned his gaze on the countenance of his sister, who sat with her full black eye bent on the carpet in unconscious absence, but found no explanation. His look was changed to the face of Frances, who, startling with the earnestness of his expression, arose, and hastily inquired if he would have any assistance.

“ If, madam, you can pardon the rudeness,” said the wounded officer, making a feeble effort to raise his body, “ I would request to have Captain Lawton’s company for a moment.”

Frances hastened instantly to communicate his wish to that gentleman, and, impelled by an anxious interest she could not control, returned again to her seat by the side of Miss Singleton.

“ Lawton,” said the youth, impatiently,

as the trooper entered, "hear you from the major?"

The eye of the sister was now bent on the face of the trooper, who made his salutations to the lady with the ease of a gentleman, blended with the frankness of a soldier, and answered—

"His man has been here twice to inquire how we fared in the Lazaretto."

"And why not himself?" said the other quickly.

"Ah! that is a question the major can answer best himself," returned the dragoon drily; "but you know the red coats are abroad, and Dunwoodie commands in the county; these English must be looked to."

"True," said Singleton slowly, as if struck with the other's reasons; "but how is it that you are idle when there is work to do?"

"My sword-arm is not in the best condition, and Roanoke has a dreadfully shambling gait this morning," said the trooper with a shrug; "besides, there is another

reason I could mention, if it were not that Miss Wharton would never forgive me."

"Speak, I beg, sir, without dread of my displeasure," said Frances, withdrawing her eyes from the countenance of Miss Singleton, and returning the good-humoured smile of the trooper with the natural archness of her own lovely face.

"The odours of your kitchen, then," cried Lawton bluntly, "forbid my quitting the domains, until I qualify myself to speak with more certainty concerning the fatness of the land."

"Oh ! aunt Jeannette is exerting herself to do credit to my father's hospitality," said the laughing maid, "and I am a truant from her labours, as I shall be a stranger to her favour, unless I proffer my assistance."

After making a proper apology to the stranger, Frances withdrew to seek her aunt, musing deeply on the character and extreme sensibility of the new acquaintance chance had brought to the cottage.

The wounded officer followed her with his eyes, as her lovely figure moved with infantile grace through the door of his apartment, and as she vanished from his view, observed—

“Such an aunt and niece are seldom to be met with, Jack ; this seems a fairy, but the aunt is angelic.”

“Ah ! George, you are doing well, I see,” said the trooper ; “ your enthusiasm holds its own.”

“ I should be ungrateful as well as insensible, did I not bear testimony to the loveliness of Miss Peyton.”

“ A good motherly lady,” said the dragoon, drily ; “ but as to love, you know, that is a matter of taste. I think a few years younger, with deference to the sex,” bowing to Miss Singleton, “ would accord better with my fancy.”

“ She must be under twenty,” said the other quickly.

“ Oh, doubtless, about nineteen,” said Lawton, with extreme gravity ; “ yet she looks a trifle older.”

“ You have mistaken an elder sister for the aunt,” said Isabella, laying her fair hand on the mouth of the invalid ; “ but you must be silent ; your feelings are beginning to affect your frame.”

The entrance of Doctor Sitgreaves, who, in some alarm, noticed the increase of feverish symptoms in his patient, enforced this mandate ; and the trooper withdrew to pay a visit of condolence to Roanoke, who had been an equal sufferer with himself in their last night’s somerset. To his great joy, his man pronounced the steed to be equally convalescent with the master ; and Lawton found that, by dint of rubbing the animal’s limbs several hours without ceasing, he was enabled to place his feet in what he called systematic motion. Orders were accordingly given to be in readiness to prepare to rejoin the troop at the four corners, so soon as the captain had shared in the bounty of the approaching banquet.

In the mean time, Henry Wharton had entered the apartment of Wellmere, and, by his sympathetic feelings on account of

a defeat in which they had been alike unfortunate, succeeded greatly in restoring the colonel to his own good graces ; he was consequently enabled to rise and prepare to meet a rival of whom he had spoken so lightly, and, as the result had proved, with so little reason. Wharton knew this misfortune, as it was termed by both, was owing to the other's rashness ; but he forbore to speak of any thing except the unfortunate accident which had deprived the English of their leader, and their consequent defeat.

“ In short, Wharton,” said the colonel, putting one leg out of bed, “ it may be called a combination of untoward events ; your own ungovernable horse prevented my orders from being carried to the major, in season to flank the rebels.”

“ Very true,” replied the captain, kicking a slipper towards the bed ; “ had we succeeded in getting a few good fires upon them in flank, we should have sent these brave Virginians to the right about.”

“ Ay ! and that in double quick time,”

cried the colonel, with very considerable animation, making the other leg follow its companion; "then it was necessary to rout the guides, you know; and the movement gave them the best possible opportunity to charge."

"Yes," said the other, sending the second slipper after the first, "and that Dunwoodie never overlooks an advantage."

"I think if we had the thing to do over again," continued the colonel, raising himself on his feet, "we might alter the case very materially, though the chief thing the rebels have now to boast of is my capture; they were repulsed, you saw, in their attempt to drive us from the wood."

"At least they would have been, had they made an attack," said the captain, throwing his clothes within reach of the colonel.

"Ay! why that, you know, is the same thing," returned Wellmere, dressing himself; "to assume such an attitude as to intimidate your enemy is the chief art of war."

“Doubtless,” said the captain, entering himself a little into the proud feelings of a soldier; “then you may remember in one charge they were completely routed.”

“True—true,” cried the colonel, with animation; “had I been there to have improved that advantage, we might have turned the table completely on the yankees;” in saying which he completed his toilette, and was prepared to make his appearance, fully restored to his own good opinion, and fairly persuaded that his capture was owing to casualties absolutely without the control of man.

The knowledge that Colonel Wellmere was to be a partaker in the feast in no degree diminished the preparations which were already making for that important event; and Sarah, after receiving the compliments of the gentleman, and making, with blushing cheeks, many kind inquiries after the state of his wounds, proceeded in person to lend her aid in embellishing what would now be of additional interest.

CHAPTER II.

I will stand to and feed,
 Although my last ; no matter, since I feel
 The best is past :—Brother, my Lord the Duke,
 Stand to, and do as we—”

Tempest.

THE savour of preparation, which had been noticed by Captain Lawton, began to increase vastly within the walls of the cottage. Certain sweet-smelling odours, that rose from the subterraneous territories of Cæsar, gave to the trooper the most pleasing assurance, that his olfactory nerves, which on such occasions were as acute as his eyes on others, had faithfully performed their duty ; and, for the benefit of enjoying the passing sweets as they arose, the dragoon so placed himself at a window of the building, that not a vapour, charged with the spices of the east, could exhale on its passage to the clouds, with-

out first giving its incense, by way of tribute, to his nose. Lawton, however, by no means indulged himself in this comfortable arrangement without first making such preparations, to do meet honour to the feast, as his scanty wardrobe would allow. The uniform of his corps was always a passport to the proudest tables, and this, though somewhat tarnished by faithful service and unceremonious usage, was properly brushed and decked out for the occasion. His head, which nature had marked with the blackness of a crow, now shone with the spotless whiteness of the dove; and his hand, that so well became, by its bony and gigantic frame, the sabre it wielded so indiscreetly, peered from beneath a ruffle with something like maiden delicacy. The improvements of the dragoon went no farther, excepting that his boots shone with more than holiday splendor, and his spurs glittered in the rays of the sun like worthy offspring of the hills of Potosi.

Cæsar moved through the apartments

with a face charged with an importance, vastly exceeding that which had accompanied him in his melancholy task of the morning. The black had early returned from the message on which he had been despatched by the pedlar, and, obedient to the commands of his mistress, promptly appeared to give his services, where his allegiance was due—so serious, indeed, was his duty now becoming, that it was only by odd moments he was enabled to impart to his sable brother, who had been sent in attendance on Miss Singleton to the Locusts, any portion of the wonderful incidents of the momentous night he had so lately passed through. By ingeniously using, however, such moments as might be fairly thought his own, Cæsar communicated so many of the heads of his tale, as served to open the eyes of his visitor to a width that justly entitled them to the significant appellative of saucer. Indeed, to such a state of amazement had the gusto for the marvellous conducted the sable worthies, that Miss Peyton found it ne-

cessary to interpose her authority, in order to postpone the residue of the history to a more befitting opportunity.

“ Ah! Miss Jin’nett,” said Cæsar, shaking his head, and looking all that he expressed, “ ’twas awful to see Johnny Birch walk on a feet, when he lie dead.”

This concluded the conversation for the present, though the black promised himself, and actually put in execution his intention of having many a good gossip on the solemn subject hereafter.

The ghost thus happily laid, the department of Miss Peyton throve with additional success, and by the time the afternoon’s sun had travelled a two hours’ journey from the meridian, the formal procession from the kitchen to the parlour commenced under the auspices of Cæsar, who led the van, supporting a turkey on the palms of his withered hands with the dexterity of a balance-master.

Next followed the servant of Captain Lawton, bearing, as he marched stiffly and walking wide, as if allowing room for his

steed, a ham of true Virginian flavour ;— being a present from the spinster's wealthy brother in Accomac. The supporter of this savory dish kept his eye on his trust with military precision, and by the time he reached his destination it might be difficult to say which contained the most juice, his mouth or the Accomac bacon.

Third in the line was to be seen the valet of Colonel Wellmere, who carried in either hand chickens fricassied, and oyster-pattys.

After him marched the attendant of Dr. Sitgreaves, who had instinctively seized an enormous tureen, as most resembling matters he understood ; and followed on in place, until the steams of the soup so completely bedimmed the spectacles he wore as a badge of office, that, on arriving at the scene of action, he was compelled to deposit his freight on the floor, until, by removing the glasses, he could see his way through the piles of reserved china and plate-warmers in safety.

Next followed another trooper, whose

duty it was to attend on Captain Singleton ; and as if apportioning his appetite to the feeble state of his master, he had contented himself with conveying a pair of ducks, roasted until their tempting fragrance began to make him repent his demolishing so lately a breakfast that had been provided for his master's sister, with another prepared for himself.

The white boy, who belonged to the house, brought up the rear, groaning under the load of sundry dishes of vegetables that the cook, by way of climax, had unwittingly heaped upon him.

But this was far from all of the preparations for that day's feast. Cæsar no sooner deposited his bird, which but the week before had been flying among the highlands of Duchess, little dreaming of so soon heading such a goodly assemblage, than he turned mechanically on his heel, and took up his line of march again for the kitchen. In this evolution the black was imitated by his companions in succession, and another procession to the parlour

followed in the same order. By this admirable arrangement, whole flocks of pigeons, certain bevys of quails, shoals of flat-fish, bass, and sundry wood-cock, found their way into the presence of the company above stairs.

A third attack brought suitable quantities of potatoes, onions, beets, cold-slaw, rice, and all the other minutiae of a goodly dinner; and for a time this completed the preparations.

The board now fairly groaned with American profusion; and Cæsar, glancing his eye over the show with a most approving conscience, after moving every dish that had not been placed on the table with his own hands, proceeded to acquaint the mistress of the revels, that his task was happily accomplished.

Some half hour before the martial array we have just recorded took place, all the ladies had disappeared, much in the same unaccountable manner that swallows flee the approach of winter. But the spring-time of their return had arrived, and the

whole party were collected in an apartment that, in consequence of its containing no side-table, and being furnished with a chintz-covered settee, was termed a withdrawing-room.

The kind-hearted spinster had deemed the occasion worthy, not only of extraordinary preparations in the culinary department, but had seen proper to deck her own person in garments suited to the guests it was now her happiness to entertain.

On her head Miss Peyton wore a cap of exquisite lawn, which was ornamented in front with a broad border of lace, that spread from the face in such a manner as to admit of a display of artificial flowers, clustered in a tasteful group on the summit of her fine forehead.

The colour of her hair was lost in the profusion of powder with which it was covered ; but a slight curling of the extremities in some degree relieved the formality of its starched arrangement, and gave a look of feminine softness to the features.

Her dress was a rich heavy silk of violet colour, cut low around the bust, with a stomacher of the same materials, that fitted close to the figure, and exhibited the form from the shoulders to the waist, in its true proportions ; below, the dress was full, and sufficiently showed, that parsimony in attire was not a foible of the day. A small hoop displayed the beauty of the fabric to advantage, and aided in giving majesty to the figure.

The tall stature of the spinster was heightened by shoes of the same material with the dress, whose heels added more than an inch to the liberality of nature.

The sleeves were short and close to the limb, until they fell off at the elbows in large ruffles, that hung in rich profusion from the arm when extended ; and duplicates and triplicates of lawn, trimmed with Dresden lace, lent their aid in giving delicacy to a hand and arm that yet retained their whiteness and symmetry. A treble row of large pearl closely encircled her throat, and a handkerchief of lace par-

tially concealed that part of the person that the silk had left exposed, but which the experience of forty years had warned Miss Peyton should now be veiled.

Thus attired, and standing erect with the lofty grace that distinguished the manners of that day, the spinster would have looked into atoms a bevy of modern belles.

The taste of Sarah had kept even pace with the decorations of her aunt; and a dress, differing in no respect from the one just described, but in material and tints, exhibited her imposing form to equal advantage. The satin of her robe was of a pale blush colour. Twenty years did not, however, require the skreen that was prudent in forty, and nothing but an envious border of exquisite lace hid, in some measure, what the satin left exposed to the view. The upper part of the bust and fine fall of the shoulders were blazing in all their native beauty, and, like the aunt, the throat was ornamented by a treble row of pearl, to correspond with which were

rings of the same jewel in the ears. The head was without a cap, and the hair drawn up from the countenance so as to give to the eye all the loveliness of a forehead as polished as marble and as white as snow. A few straggling curls fell gracefully in the neck, and a bouquet of artificial flowers was also placed, like a coronet, over her commanding brow.

Miss Singleton had yielded her brother to the advice of Dr. Sitgreaves, who had succeeded in getting his patient in a deep sleep, after quieting certain feverish symptoms that followed the agitation of the interview related. The sister was persuaded by the observant mistress of the mansion to make one of the party, and sat by the side of Sarah; differing but little in appearance from that lady, except in refusing the use of powder on her raven locks, and that her unusually high forehead and large and brilliant eye gave an expression of thoughtfulness to her features, that was possibly heightened by the paleness of her cheek.

Last and least, but not the most unlovely, in this display of female charms, was the youngest daughter of Mr. Wharton. Frances, we have already mentioned, left the city before she had attained to the age of fashionable womanhood. A few adventurous spirits were already beginning to make inroads in the barriers which custom had so long drawn around the comforts of the fair sex; and the maid had so far ventured in imitation, as to trust her beauty to the height which nature had given her. This was but little, but that little was a master-piece. Frances several times had determined, in the course of the morning, to bestow more than usual pains in the decoration of her person. Each time in succession, as she formed this resolution, she spent a few minutes in looking earnestly towards the north, and then she as invariably changed it.

At the appointed hour, the maid appeared in the drawing-room, clothed in a vestment of pale blue silk, of a cut and fashion much like that worn by her sister.

Her hair was left to the wild curls of nature, its exuberance being confined to the crown of her head by a long low comb, made of light tortoise-shell; a colour barely distinguishable in the golden hue of her tresses. Her dress was without a plait or a wrinkle, and fitted the form with an exactitude that might lead one to imagine the arch girl more than suspected the beauties it displayed. A tucker of rich Dresden lace softened the contour of the figure. Her head was without ornament; but around her throat was a necklace of gold clasped in front with a rich cornelian.

Dr. Sitgreaves was a mineralogist among his other qualities, and during the day he ventured a remark on the beauty of the stone; and for a long time the simple operator was at a loss to conjecture what there was in the observation to call the blood so tumultuously to the face of the maiden. His surprise might haply have continued to the hour of his death, had not Lawton kindly intimated that it was indignation at his overlooking the object

on which the bauble reposed. The gloves of kid, which concealed the hands and part of the arm, leaving enough of the latter in sight, however, to proclaim its fair proportions, indicated that there was no one present to tempt the flattering, and perhaps unconscious, display of womanly power.

Once, and once only, as they moved towards the repast prepared with so much judgment and skill by Cæsar, did Lawton see a foot thrust itself from beneath the folds of her robe, and exhibit its little beauties encased in a slipper of blue silk, clasped close to the shape by a buckle of brilliants. The trooper caught himself sighing as he thought, though it was good for nothing in the stirrup, how enchantingly it would grace a minuet.

As the black appeared on the threshold of the room making a low reverence, which has been interpreted for some centuries into "dinner waits," Mr. Wharton, clad in a dress of drab, and loaded with enormous buttons, advanced formally to Miss

Singleton, and bending his powdered head to near the level of the hand he extended, received her's in return.

Dr. Sitgreaves offered the same homage to Miss Peyton, and met with equal favour; the lady first pausing, with stately grace, to draw on her gloves.

Colonel Wellmere was honoured with a smile from Sarah while performing a similar duty; and Frances gave the ends of her taper fingers to Captain Lawton, with a manner that said so much to the corps, and so little to the man.

Much time, and some trouble, was expended before the whole party were, to the great joy of Cæsar, comfortably arranged around the table with proper attention to all points of etiquette and precedence. The black well knew the viands were getting cold, and felt his honour concerned in the event.

For the first ten minutes all but the captain of dragoons found themselves in a situation much to their liking; but he felt himself a little soured at the multi-

plicity of the questions and offers of the host, which were meant to be conducive to his enjoyments, but which in truth had an exactly contrary effect. The captain could not eat and answer in a breath, and the demands for the latter somewhat interfered with the execution of the former.

Next came the drinking with the ladies; but as the wine was excellent, and the glasses of very ample size, the trooper bore this interruption with consummate good nature. Nay, so fearful was he of giving offence, and omitting any of the nicer points of punctilio, that, having commenced this courtesy with the lady who sat next him, he persevered until not one of his fair companions could, with justice, reproach him with partiality in this particular.

His long abstemiousness from any thing like generous wine might plead the excuse of Captain Lawton, especially when exposed to so strong a temptation as was now before him. Mr. Wharton had been one of a set of politicians in New York,

whose principal exploits, before the war, had been to assemble, and pass sage opinions on the signs of the times, under the inspiration of certain liquors which were made from a grape that grew on the south side of the island of Maderia, and found its way into the colonies of North-America by the way of the West-Indies, sojourning awhile in the Western Archipelago, by way of trying the virtues of the climate. A large supply of this cordial had been drawn from his store-house in the city, and some of it now sparkled in a bottle before the captain, blushing luxuriantly in the rays of the sun, which were passing obliquely through it.

If the meat and vegetables had made their entrance with perfect order and propriety, their exeunt was effected with far less. The point was to clear the board something after the fabled tale of the harpies, and by dint of scrabbling, tossing, breaking, and spilling, the overflowing remnants of the repast vanished from the room. And now another series of proces-

sions commenced, by virtue of which a goodly display of pasty, with its usual accompaniments, garnished the table.

Mr. Wharton poured out a glass of wine for the lady who sat on his right hand, and pushing the bottle to a guest, said, with a low bow—

“We are to be honoured with a toast from Miss Singleton.”

Although there was nothing more in this movement than occurred every day on such occasions, yet the lady trembled, coloured, and grew pale again, seemingly endeavouring to rally her thoughts, until by her agitation she had excited the interest of the whole party; when, by an effort, and in a manner as if she had strived in vain to think of another, Isabella said faintly—

“Major Dunwoodie.”

The health was drank cheerfully by all but Colonel Wellmere, who wet his lips, and drew figures on the table with some of the liquor he had spilt; and Frances thought deeply on the manner of doing, what in itself would have excited no suspicions.

At length Colonel Wellmere broke silence, by saying aloud to Captain Lawton—

“I suppose, sir, this Mr. Dunwoodie will receive promotion in the rebel army, for the advantage my misfortune gave him over my command.”

The trooper had supplied the wants of nature to his perfect satisfaction; and perhaps, with the exception of Washington and his immediate commander, there was no mortal whose displeasure he regarded a tittle: he was free to converse or to fight; to him it mattered nought. First helping himself, therefore, to a little of his favourite bottle, he replied with admirable coolness—

“Colonel Wellmere, your pardon—Major Dunwoodie owes his allegiance to the confederated states of North-America, and where he owes it he pays it, and is no rebel; promoted I hope he may be, both because he deserves it, and I am next in rank in the corps; and I know not what you call a misfortune, unless you deem meeting the Virginia horse as such.”

"We will not differ about terms, sir," said the colonel haughtily; "I spoke as duty to my sovereign prompted; but do you not call the loss of a commander a misfortune to a party?"

"It certainly may be so," said the trooper with great emphasis.

"Miss Peyton, will you favor us with a toast?" cried the master of the house, anxious to stop a dialogue in which he might be called on for an opinion.

The spinster bowed her head with infinite dignity as she named "General Montrose;" and her nephew smiled as he noticed the long absent bloom stealing lightly over her fine features.

"There is no term more doubtful than that word misfortune," said the surgeon, regardless of the nice manœuvres of the host: "some deem one thing a misfortune, others its opposite: misfortune begets misfortune: life is a misfortune; for it may be the means of enduring misfortune; and death is a misfortune, as it abridges the enjoyments of life."

"It is a misfortune that our mess has no such wine as this," interrupted the trooper abruptly, and laying in a stock to supply the deficiency.

"We will pledge you a sentiment in it, sir, as it seems to suit your taste," said Mr. Wharton, still uncertain what would be the termination of all these misfortunes.

Filling to the brim, Lawton said, looking hard at the English colonel, "A clear field, and no favor."

"I drink your toast, Captain Lawton," said the surgeon gravely; "inasmuch as courtesy requires no less at my hands; but I wish never to see your troop nearer to an enemy than long pistol-shot."

"Let me tell you, Mr. Archibald Sitgreaves," said the dragoon hastily, "that's a damned unneighbourly wish."

The ladies bridled, and Miss Peyton made a motion to withdraw, which was instantly obeyed by her fair bevy of juniors.

The suddenness of the movement somewhat appalled the trooper, and he stammered out an apology to Frances, who

stood next him, which the laughing maid received very good-naturedly, out of regard to the coat he wore, although she knew it would afford matter of triumph to her sister for a month to come.

“’Tis unneighbourly to wish a man at such a distance from his friends,” said the captain good-humouredly, in a manner that spoke his willingness to atone; it was, however, too late, and the ladies retired with much dignity amidst the bows and compliments of all but the chop-fallen dragoon. The discomfiture produced an utter stagnation in the thoughts of the trooper; and Mr. Wharton, making a profusion of apologies to his guests, arose and left the room, followed by his son, and together both quitted the house. The retreat of the ladies was the signal for the appearance of the surgeon’s segar-box, which, having comfortably established it in a corner of his mouth, in a certain knowing way, caused not the slightest interruption to the following discourse—

“If any thing can sweeten captivity and wounds, it must be the happiness of suffering in the society of the ladies who have left us,” said the colonel, gallantly, feeling something of the kind due to the hospitality he experienced, and, perhaps, also, moved by a softer sentiment.

The doctor cast a glance of silent observation on the black scarf around the neck of the Englishman, and knocking the ashes from his segar with his little finger, in the manner of an adept, replied—

“Sympathy and kindness have, doubtless, their genial influence on the human system. The connexion is intimate between the moral and physical feelings; but still, to accomplish a cure, and restore nature to the healthy tone it has lost from disease or accident, requires more than can flow from unguided sympathies. In such cases, the lights”—the surgeon accidentally caught the eye of the trooper, which was fast regaining its complacency—taking two or three hasty puffs in huge dis-

dain, he essayed to finish the sentence—"yes, in such cases, the knowledge that flows from the—the lights."

"You were saying, sir," said Colonel Wellmere, sipping his wine.

"Yes, sir," said the operator, turning his back abruptly on Lawton; "I was saying that a bread-poultice would not set a broken arm."

"More is the pity," cried the trooper, venturing again to trust the sound of his own voice.

"Now, Colonel Wellmere, to you, as a man of education," said the surgeon, with great earnestness, "I can with safety appeal." The Colonel bowed complacently. "You must have noticed the dreadful havoc made in your ranks by the men who were led by this gentleman;" the colonel looked grave again; "how, when blows lighted on their frames, life was invariably extinguished beyond all hope of scientific reparation—how certain yawning wounds were inflicted, that must prove fatal to the art of the most experienced

practitioner ; now, sir, to you I triumphantly appeal, to know whether your detachment would not have been as effectually defeated, if the men had all lost a right arm for instance, as if they had all lost their heads."

"The triumph of your appeal is somewhat hasty, sir," said Wellmere, nettled at the unfortunate conjunction of terms in the doctor's question.

"Is the cause of liberty advanced a step by such injudicious harshness in the field?" continued the surgeon, disregarding the other's equivocation, and bent on the favorite principle of his life.

"I am yet to learn that the cause of liberty is in any manner advanced by the services of any gentleman in the rebel army," said the colonel, promptly.

"Not liberty!" said the appalled operator in astonishment ; "Good God, for what then are we contending?"

"Slavery, sir ; yes, even slavery," cried the Englishman, with confidence in his infallibility—"you are putting the tyranny

of a mob on the throne of a kind and lenient prince—where is the consistency of your boasted liberty?”

“Consistency,” repeated the surgeon, looking around him a little wildly at hearing such sweeping charges against a cause he had so long thought to be holy.

“Ay, sir, your consistency. Your congress of sages have published a manifesto, wherein they set forth the equality of political rights.”

“’Tis true, sir, and it is done most ably.”

“I say nothing of its ability; but if true, why not set your slaves at liberty?” cried Wellmere, in a tone that plainly showed he had transferred the triumph to his own standard.

Every American feels humbled at the necessity of vindicating his country from the inconsistency and injustice of this practice; his emotions are much like those of a man who is compelled to exonerate himself from a disgraceful charge, although he may know the accusation to be false. At the bottom, Sitgreaves had much good

sense, and, thus called on, he took up the cudgels of argument in downright earnest.

“We deem it a liberty to have a voice in the councils by which we are governed. We think it a hardship to be ruled by a people who live at a distance of three thousand miles from us, and who cannot, and who do not, feel a single political interest in common with ourselves. I say nothing of oppression; the child was of age, and was entitled to the privileges of majority. In such cases, there is but one tribunal to which to appeal for a nation’s rights—it is power, and we now make the appeal.”

“Such doctrines may suit your present purposes,” said Wellmere, with a sneer of contempt; “but I apprehend it is opposed to all the opinions and practices of civilized nations.”

“It is in conformity with the practices of all nations,” said the surgeon, returning the nod, and drinking to Lawton, who enjoyed the good sense of his comrade as much as he disliked what he called ‘medical talk.’ “Who would be ruled when

he can rule—the only rational ground to take is, that every community has a right to govern itself, so that in no manner it violates the laws of God.”

“And is holding your fellow-creatures in bondage, in conformity to those laws?” asked the colonel impressively.

The surgeon took another glass, and hemming once, returned to the combat.

“Sir,” said he, “slavery is of very ancient origin, and seems to have been confined to no particular religion or form of government; every nation of civilized Europe does, or has held their fellow-creatures in this kind of duress.”

“You will except Great Britain, sir,” cried the colonel proudly.

“No, sir,” continued the surgeon confidently, feeling that he was carrying the war out of his own country; “I cannot except Great Britain. It was her children, her ships, and her laws, that first introduced the practice into these states; and on her institutions the judgment must fall. It is true, we continue the practice; but

we must come gradually to the remedy, or create an evil greater than that which we endure at present: doubtless, as we advance, the manumission of our slaves will accompany us, until happily these fair regions will exist, without a single image of the Creator that is held in a state, which disqualifies him to judge of that Creator's goodness."

It will be remembered that Doctor Sitgreaves spoke forty years ago, and Wellmere was unable to contradict his prophetic assertion.

Finding the subject exceeding his comprehension, the Englishman retired to the apartment where the ladies had assembled, and, seated by the side of Sarah and her aunt, found a more pleasing employment in relating the events of fashionable life in the metropolis, and recalling the thousand little anecdotes of their former association. Miss Peyton was a pleased listener, as she dispensed the bounties of the tea-table with precise grace, and Sarah frequently bowed her blushing countenance to the needle-

work in her lap, as her face glowed at the flattering remarks of her companion.

The dialogue we have related established a perfect truce again between the surgeon and his comrade, and the former having paid a visit to Singleton, they took their leave of the ladies, and mounted; the former to visit the wounded at the encampment, and the latter to rejoin his troop. But their movement was arrested at the gate by an appearance, which we will relate in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER III.

I see no more those white locks thinly spread,
Round the bald polish of that honoured head:—
No more that meek, that suppliant look in prayer,
Nor that pure faith that gave it force—are there:—
But he is blest, and I lament no more,
A wise good man contented to be poor.

Crabbe.

WE have already said, that the customs of America leave the remains of the dead but a short time in the sight of the mourners; and the necessity of providing for his own safety compelled the pedlar to abridge even this brief space. In the confusion and agitation produced by the events we have recorded, the death of the elder Birch had occurred unnoticed; but a sufficient number of the immediate neighbours were hastily collected, and the ordinary rites of sepulture were paid to the deceased: it was the approach of this humble proces-

sion that arrested the movements of the trooper and his comrade. Four of the men supported the body on a rude bier; and four others walked in advance, ready to relieve their friends occasionally from their burden. The pedlar walked next the coffin, and by his side moved Katy Haynes, with a most determined aspect of woe, and next to the mourners came Mr. Wharton and the English captain. Two or three old men and women, with a few straggling boys, brought up the rear. Captain Lawton sat in his saddle in rigid silence until the bearers came opposite to his position, and then, for the first time, Harvey raised his eyes from the ground, and saw the enemy he dreaded so near him. The first impulse of the pedlar was certainly flight; but, recovering his recollection, he fixed his eye on the coffin of his parent, and passed the dragoon with a firm step, but swelling heart. The trooper slowly lifted his cap from his head, and continued uncovered until Mr. Wharton and his son had moved by him, when, accom-

panied by the surgeon, he rode leisurely in the rear, maintaining an inflexible silence. Cæsar emerged from the cellar-kitchen of the cottage, and, with a face of settled solemnity, added himself to the number of the followers of the funeral, though with a humble mien, and at a most respectful distance from the horseman ; the first feeling was owing to the colour of his skin ; and the latter circumstance, to certain emotions of dread that prevailed in the bosom of the black, whenever Captain Lawton prevented his organs of vision from resting on more agreeable objects. Cæsar had placed around his arm, a little above the elbow, a napkin of unsullied whiteness, it being the only time since his departure from the city, that the black had an opportunity of exhibiting himself in the garniture of servile mourning. He was a great lover of propriety, and had been a little stimulated to this display by a desire to show his sable friend from Georgia all the decencies of a New-York funeral ; and the ebullition of his zeal went

off very well, producing no other result, than a mild lecture from Miss Peyton at his return, on the fitness of things. The attendance of the black was thought well enough in itself; but the napkin was deemed a superfluous exhibition of ceremony, at the funeral of a man, who had performed all the menial offices in his own person. The grave-yard was an enclosure on the grounds of Mr. Wharton, which had been fenced with stone, and set apart for the purpose by that gentleman some years before. It was not, however, intended as a burial place for any of his own family. Until the fire, which raged as the British troops took possession of New-York, had laid Trinity in ashes, a goodly gilded tablet graced its walls, that spoke the virtues of his deceased parents, and beneath a flag of marble in one of the aisles of the church their bones were left to moulder with becoming dignity. Captain Lawton made a movement, as if he was disposed to follow the procession when it left the highway, to enter the field which contained

the graves of the humble dead ; but he was recalled to his recollection by a hint from his companion, that he was taking the wrong road.

“ Of all the various methods which have been adopted by man for the disposal of his earthly remains, which do you prefer, Captain Lawton ?” said the surgeon with great deliberation, as they separated from their line of march : “ now in some countries the body is exposed to be devoured by wild beasts ; in others, it is suspended in the air to exhale its substance in the manner of decomposition ; in some countries it is consumed on the funeral pile, and then, again, it is inhumed in the bowels of the earth ; every people have their own particular fashion, and to which do you give the preference ?”

“ All are very agreeable,” said the trooper, disregarding the harangue of the other, and following the group they had left with his eyes ; “ which do you most admire ?”

“ The last as practised by ourselves,” said the operator promptly ; “ for the other

three are destructive to the opportunities for dissection ; but, in the last, the coffin can lie in peaceful decency, while the remains are made to subserve the useful purposes of science. Ah ! Captain Lawton, I enjoy comparatively but few opportunities of such a nature, to what I expected to meet on entering the army."

"To what may these pleasures amount in a year, numerically?" said the captain drily, and withdrawing his gaze from the grave-yard.

"Within a dozen, upon my honour," said the surgeon piteously ; "my best picking is when the corps is detached ; for when we are with the main army, there are so many boys to be satisfied, that I seldom get a good subject. Those youngsters are dreadfully wasteful, and as greedy as vultures."

"A dozen !" echoed the trooper in surprise ; "why I furnish you more than that number with my own hands."

"Ah ! Jack," returned the doctor, approaching the subject with great tenderness

of manner, "it is seldom I can do any thing with your patients, you disfigure them wofully; believe me, when I tell you as a friend—merely as a friend, that your system is all wrong; for you unnecessarily destroy life, and then you injure the body so that it is unfit for the only use that can be made of a dead man."

The trooper maintained a silence, which he thought would be the most probable means of preserving peace between them; and the surgeon, turning his head from taking a last look at the burial, as they rode round the foot of the hill that shut the valley from their sight, continued with a kind of suppressed sigh—

"A body might get a natural death from that grave-yard to night, if there was but time and opportunity; the patient must be the father of the lady we saw this morning."

"The bitch-doctor; she with the sky-blue complexion," said the trooper, with a shrewd smile, that began to cause uneasiness to his companion; "but the lady

was not the gentleman's daughter, only his medico-petticoat attendant; and the Harvey, whose name was made to rhyme with every word in her song, is the renowned pedlar-spy."

"What!" cried the astonished surgeon; "he who unhorsed you."

"No man ever unhorsed me, Doctor Sitgreaves," said the dragoon with abundant gravity; "I fell by a mischance of Roanoke; we kissed the earth together."

"A warm embrace, from the love-spots it left on your cuticle," returned the surgeon, with some of the other's archness; "but 'tis a thousand pities that you cannot find where the tattling rascal lies hid."

"He followed his father's body," said the trooper composedly.

"What! and you let him pass," cried the surgeon with extraordinary animation, checking his horse instantly; "let us return immediately and take him; to-morrow you have him hung, Jack, and damn him, I'll dissect him."

"Softly, softly, my dear Archibald,"

said the trooper soothingly ; “ would you arrest a man while paying the last offices to a dead father ; leave him to me, and I pledge myself he shall have justice.”

The doctor muttered his dissatisfaction at any postponement of his vengeance, but was compelled to acquiesce, from a regard to his reputation for propriety, and they continued their ride to the quarters of the corps, engaged in various discussions concerning the welfare of the human body.

Birch supported the grave and collected manner, that was thought becoming in a male mourner on such occasions, and to Katy was left the part of exhibiting the tenderness of the softer sex. There are some people, whose feelings are of such a nature, that they cannot weep unless it be in proper company, and the spinster was a good deal addicted to all congregational virtues : after turning her head round the small assemblage, the housekeeper found the eyes of the few females who were present fixed on her in solemn expectation, and the effect was instantaneous ; the

maiden really wept, and gained no inconsiderable sympathy and reputation for a tender heart from the spectators. The muscles of the pedlar's face were seen to move, and as the first clod of earth fell on the tenement of his father, sending up that dull, hollow, sound, that speaks so eloquently the mortality of man, his whole frame was for an instant convulsed; he bent his body down as if in pain, his fingers worked as his hands hung lifeless by his side, and there was an expression in his countenance that seemed to announce a writhing of the soul; but it was not unresisted, and it was transient: he stood erect, drew a long breath, and looked around him with an elevated face, that even seemed to smile with a consciousness of having obtained the mastery. The grave was soon filled; a rough stone, placed at either extremity, marked its position, and the turf, with a faded vegetation that was adapted to the fortunes of the deceased, covered the little hillock with the last office of seemliness. The task ended, the

neighbours, who had each officiously tendered his services in performing this duty, paused, and, lifting their hats, stood looking toward the mourner, who now felt himself to be really alone in the world : removing his hat also, the pedlar hesitated a moment to gather energy, and spoke—

“ My friends and neighbours, I thank you for assisting me to bury my dead out of my sight.”

A solemn pause succeeded the brief and customary conclusion, and the group dispersed in silence, some few walking with the mourners back to their own habitation, but respectfully leaving them at its entrance. The pedlar and Katy were followed into the building by one man, however, who was well known to the surrounding country by the significant term of “speculator.” Katy saw him enter with a heart that palpitated with dreadful forebodings, but Harvey civilly handed him a chair, and evidently was prepared for the visit.

The pedlar went to the door, and tak-

ing a cautious glance round the valley, quickly returned, and commenced the following dialogue:—

“The sun has just left the top of the eastern hill; my time presses me; here is the deed for the house and lot; every thing done according to law.”

The stranger took the paper, and conned its contents with a deliberation that proceeded partly from his caution, and partly from the unlucky circumstance of his education having been sadly neglected when a youth. The time occupied in this tedious examination was employed by Harvey in gathering together certain articles, which he intended to include in the stores that were to leave the habitation with himself. Katy had already enquired of the pedlar, whether the deceased had left a will, and saw the Bible placed in the bottom of a new pack, which she had made for his accommodation, with a most stoical indifference; but, as the six silver spoons were laid carefully by its side, a sudden twinge of her conscience objected to such

a palpable waste of property, and she broke silence by saying, somewhat abruptly—

“ When you marry, Harvey, you may miss them spoons.”

“ I never shall marry,” said the pedlar laconically.

“ Well, if you don’t, there’s no occasion to be short. I’m sure no one asked you. I should like to know, though, of what use so many spoons can be to a single man : for my part, I think it’s a duty for every man who is so well provided to have a wife and family to maintain.”

At the time when Katy expressed this sentiment, the fortune of women in her class of life consisted of a cow, a bed, the labours of their own hands in the shape of divers pillow-cases, blankets, and sheets, with, where fortune was unusually kind, a half-dozen of silver spoons. The spinster herself had obtained all the other necessities to completing her store by her own industry and prudence, and it can easily be imagined saw the articles she had long

counted her own, vanish in the enormous pack with a very natural dissatisfaction, that was in no degree diminished by the declaration that had preceded the act. Harvey, however, disregarded her opinions and feelings, and continued his employment of filling the pack, which soon grew to a size something like the ordinary burden of the pedlar.

“ I’m rather timoursome about this conveyance,” said the purchaser, having at length concluded his task.

“ Why so ?” said Harvey quickly.

“ I’m afeard it won’t stand good in law : I know that two of the neighbours leave home to-morrow morning, to have the place entered for confistigation, and if I should go now and give forty pounds, and lose it all, ’twould be a dead pull-back to me.”

“ They can only take my right,” said the pedlar, coolly ; “ pay me two hundred dollars, and the house is your’s ; you are a well-known whig, and you at least they won’t trouble.” As Harvey spoke, there

was a strange mixture of bitterness with the care he expressed concerning the sale of his property.

“ Say one hundred, and it is a bargain,” returned the man, with something that he meant for a good-natured smile.

“ A bargain !” echoed the pedlar in surprise, “ I thought the bargain already made.”

“ Nothing is a bargain,” said the purchaser with a gratulating chuckle, “ until papers are delivered, and the money paid in hand.”

“ You have the paper,” returned the pedlar quickly.

“ Aye, and will keep it, if you will excuse the money,” replied the speculator with a sneer : “ come, say one hundred and fifty, and I won’t be hard ; here—here is just the money.”

The pedlar looked from the window, and saw with dismay that the evening was fast advancing, and knew well that he endangered his life by remaining in the dwelling after dark ; yet he could not tole-

rate the idea of being defrauded in this manner, in a bargain that had been already fairly made ; he hesitated—

“ Well,” said the purchaser, rising ; “ mayhap you can find another man to trade with between this and morning ; but if you don’t, your title won’t be worth much afterward.”

“ Take it, Harvey,” said Katy, who felt it impossible to resist a tender like the one before her, all in English guineas : her voice roused the pedlar, and a new idea seemed to strike him.

“ I agree to the price,” he said, and, turning to the spinster, placed part of the money in her hand, as he continued— “ had I other means to pay you, I would have lost all, rather than have suffered myself to have been defrauded of part.”

“ You may lose all yet,” muttered the stranger with a sneer, as he rose and left the building.

“ Yes,” said Katy, following him with her eyes ; “ he knows your failing, Harvey ; he thinks with me, now the old gentleman

is gone, you will want a careful body to take care of your concerns."

The pedlar was busied in arranging things for his departure, and took no notice of this insinuation, while the spinster returned again to the attack. She had lived so many years in expectation of a different result from that which now seemed likely to occur, that the idea of separation began to give her more uneasiness, than she had thought herself capable of feeling, about a man so destitute and friendless as the pedlar.

"Have you another house to go to?" inquired Katy, with unusual pathos in her manner.

"Providence will provide me with a home," said Harvey, with a perceptible tremor in his voice.

"Yes," said the housekeeper quickly; "but maybe 'twill not be to your liking."

"The poor must not be difficult," returned the pedlar gravely.

"I'm sure I'm every thing but a difficult body," cried the spinster, very hastily:

“but I love to see things becoming, and in their places ; yet I wouldn’t be hard to persuade to leave this place myself. I can’t say I altogether like the ways of the people.”

“The valley is lovely,” said the pedlar with fervor, “and the people like all the race of man ; but to me it matters nothing ; all places are now alike, and all faces equally strange :” as he spoke, he dropt the article he was packing from his hand, and seated himself on a chest with a look of vacant misery.

“Not so, not so,” said Katy, instinctively shoving her chair nearer to the place where the pedlar sat ; “not so, Harvey, you must know me at least ; my face cannot be strange to you, certainly.”

Birch turned his eyes slowly on her countenance, which exhibited more of feeling, and less of self, than he had ever seen there before ; he took her hand kindly, and his own features lost some of their painful expression as he said—

“Yes, good woman, you, at least, are

not a stranger to me ; you may do me partial justice ; when others revile me, possibly your feelings may lead you to say something in my defence."

" That I will—that I would !" said Katy eagerly ; " I will defend you, Harvey, to the last drop—let me hear them that dare revile you ! you say true, Harvey, I am partial and just to you—what if you do like the king, I have often heard say he was at the bottom a good man ; but there's no religion in the old country ; for every body allows the ministers are desperate bad."

The pedlar paced the floor in evident distress of mind ; his eye had a look of wildness that Katy had never witnessed before, and his step was measured with a dignity that appalled the maiden.

" While he lived," cried Harvey, unable to smother his feelings, " there was one who read my heart ; and oh ! what a consolation to return from my secret marches of danger, and the insult and wrongs that I suffered, to receive his blessing and his praise ; but he is gone," he continued,

stopping and looking wildly towards the corner that used to hold the figure of his parent, "and who is there to do me justice?"

"Why Harvey, Harvey," Katy ventured to say imploringly; when the pedlar added, as a smile stole over his haggard features—

"Yes, there is one who will—who must know me before I die. Oh! it is dreadful to die, and leave such a name behind me."

"Don't talk of dying, Harvey," said the spinster, glancing her eye around the room, and pushing the wood in the fire to obtain a light from the blaze.

But the ebullition of feeling in the pedlar was over; it had been excited by the events of the past day, and a vivid perception of his sufferings; it was not long that passion maintained an ascendancy over the reason of the trader; and perceiving that the night had already thrown an obscurity around the objects without doors, he hastily threw his pack over his shoulders, and,

taking Katy kindly by the hand, made his parting speech—

“It is painful to part with even you, good woman, but the hour has come, and I must go: what is left in the house is freely your’s; to me it could be of no use, and it may serve to make you more comfortable—farewell—we meet hereafter.”

“Yes, in the regions of darkness,” cried a voice that caused the pedlar to sink on the chest he had risen from, in despair.

“What! another pack, Mr. Birch, and so well stuffed so soon.”

“Have you not yet done evil enough?” cried the pedlar, regaining his firmness, and springing on his feet with energy; “is it not enough to harass the last moments of a dying man—to impoverish me—what more would you have?”

“Your blood,” said the skinner, with cool malignity.

“And for money,” cried Harvey bitterly; “like the ancient Judas, you would grow rich with the price of blood.”

“Ay! and a fair price it is, my gentle-

man; fifty guineas—nearly the weight of that scare-crow carcass of your's in gold."

"Here," said Katy promptly, "here are fifteen guineas, and these drawers, and this bed, are all mine—if you will give Harvey but one hour's start from the door, they shall be your's."

"One hour," said the skinner, showing his teeth, and looking with a longing eye at the money.

"Yes, but one hour—here, take the money."

"Hold!" cried Harvey, "put no faith in the miscreants."

"She may do what she pleases with her faith," said the skinner, with malignant pleasure; "but I have the money in good keeping; as for you, Mr. Birch, we will bear your insolence, for the fifty guineas that are to pay for your gallows."

"Go on," said the pedlar proudly; "take me to Major Dunwoodie; he, at least, may be kind, although he may be just."

"I can do better than by marching so

far in such disgraceful company," replied the other very coolly: "this Mr. Dunwoodie has let one or two Tories go at large; but the troop of Captain Lawton is quartered some half mile nearer, and his receipt will get me the reward as soon as his major's: how relish you the idea of supping with Captain Lawton this evening, Mr. Birch?"

"Give me my money, or set Harvey free," cried the spinster in alarm.

"Your bribe was not enough, good woman, unless there is money in this bed:" thrusting his bayonet through the ticking, and ripping it for some distance, he took a malicious satisfaction in scattering its contents around the room.

"If," cried the housekeeper, losing sight of her personal danger in care for her newly-acquired property, "there is law in the land, I will be righted."

"The law of the neutral ground is the law of the strongest," said the skinner with a malignant laugh; "but your tongue is not as long as my bayonet; you had, there-

fore, best not set them at loggerheads, or you might be the loser."

A figure stood in the shadow of the door as if afraid to be seen in the group of skimmers; but a blaze of light, raised by some articles thrown in the fire by his persecutors, showed the pedlar the face of the purchaser of his little domain: occasionally there was some whispering between this man and the skinner nearest him, that induced Harvey to suspect he had been the dupe of a contrivance, in which that wretch had participated: it was, however, too late to repine, and he followed the party from the house with a firm and collected tread, as if marching to a triumph, and not to a gallows. In passing through the yard, the leader of the band fell over a billet of wood, and received a momentary hurt from the fall; exasperated at the accident, the fellow sprung on his feet, and exclaimed—

"The curse of heaven light on the log; the night is too dark for us to move in; throw that brand of fire in yon pile of tow, to lighten up the scene."

“ Hold !” roared the horror-struck speculator, “ you’ll fire the house.”

“ And see the farther,” said the other, hurling the fire in the midst of the combustibles ; in an instant the building was in flames ; “ come on, let us move towards the heights while we have light to pick our road.”

“ Villain !” cried the exasperated purchaser, “ is this your friendship, this my reward for kidnapping the pedlar ?”

“ ’Twould be wise to move more from the light, if you mean to entertain us with abuse, or we may see too well to let a bullet miss you,” cried the leader of the gang ; the next instant he was as good as his threat, but happily missed the terrified speculator, and equally appalled spinster, who saw herself again reduced from comparative wealth to poverty, by the blow. Prudence dictated to the pair a speedy retreat ; and the next morning, the only remains of the dwelling of the pedlar was the huge chimney we have already mentioned.

CHAPTER. IV.

Trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs from holy writ.

Moor of Venice.

THE weather, which had been mild and clear since the storm, now changed with the suddenness of the American climate. Towards evening the cold blasts poured down from the mountains, and flurries of snow plainly indicated that the month of November had arrived—a season whose temperature varies from the heats of summer to the cold of winter. Frances had stood at the window of her own apartment, watching the slow progress of the funeral procession, with a melancholy that was too deep to be excited by the spectacle. There was something in the sad

office which engaged the attention of her father and brother, that was in unison with the feelings of the maid. As she gazed around, she saw the trees bending to the force of the whirlwinds, that swept through the valley with an impetuosity that shook even the buildings of lesser importance; and the forest, that had so lately glittered in the sun with its variegated hues, was fast losing its loveliness, as the leaves were torn from the branches, and were driving irregularly before the eddies of the blast. A few of the southern dragoons, who were patrolling the passes which led to the encampment of the corps, could be distinguished at a distance on the heights, bending to their pommels, as they faced the keen air which had so lately traversed the great fresh-water lakes, and drawing their watch-coats around them in tighter folds.

The maid witnessed the disappearance of the wooden tenement of the deceased, as it was slowly lowered from the light of day, and the sight still added to the chil-

ling dreariness of the view. Captain Singleton was sleeping under the careful watchfulness of his own man, while his sister had been persuaded to take possession of her room, for the purpose of obtaining the repose, of which her last night's journeying had robbed her. The apartment of Miss Singleton communicated with the room occupied by the sisters, through a private door, as well as through the ordinary passage of the house: this door was partly open, and Frances moved towards it with the benevolent intention of ascertaining the situation of her guest, when the surprised girl saw her, whom she had thought to be sleeping, not only awake, but employed in a manner that banished all probability of present repose. The black tresses, that during the dinner had been drawn in close folds over the crown of the head, were now loosened, and fell in profusion over her shoulders and bosom, imparting a slight degree of wildness to her expressive countenance. The chilling white of her complexion was

strongly contrasted with the brilliant glances of eyes of the deepest black, that were fixed in rooted attention on a picture she held in her hand. Frances hardly breathed, as she was enabled, by a movement of Isabella, to see that it was the figure of a man in the well-known dress of the southern horse; but she gasped for breath, and instinctively laid her hand on her heart to quell its throbbings, as she thought she recognised the lineaments that were so deeply seated in her own imagination. Frances felt she was improperly prying into the sacred privacy of another; but her emotions were too powerful to permit her to speak, and she drew back to a chair, whence she still retained a view of the stranger, from whose countenance she felt it to be impossible to withdraw her eyes. Isabella was too much engrossed by her own feelings to discover the trembling figure of the maid, who witnessed her actions, and she pressed the inanimate image to her lips, with an enthusiasm that denoted the most intense passion. The ex-

pression of the countenance of the fair stranger was so changeable, and the transitions were so rapid, that Frances had scarcely time to distinguish the character of the emotion, before it was succeeded by another equally powerful, and equally attractive. Admiration and sorrow were, however, the preponderating passions; the latter was indicated by large drops that fell from her eyes on the picture, and which followed each other over her cheek at such intervals, as seemed to pronounce the grief too heavy to admit of the ordinary bursts of sorrow. Every movement of Isabella was marked by an enthusiasm that was peculiar to her nature, and every passion in its turn triumphed in her breast with an undisputed sway. The fury of the wind, as it whistled around the angles of the building, was in consonance with those feelings, and she rose and moved to a window of her apartment. Her figure was now hid from the view of Frances, who was about to rise and approach her guest, when tones of a thrilling melody chained her in breath-

less silence to the spot. The notes were wild, and the voice not powerful, but the execution exceeded any thing the maid had ever heard, and she stood, endeavouring to stifle the sounds of her own gentle breathing, until the song following was concluded:

Cold blow the blasts o'er the tops of the mountain,
 And bare is the oak on the hill,
 Slowly the vapours exhale from the fountain,
 And bright gleams the ice-bordered rill;
 All nature is seeking its annual rest,
 But the slumbers of peace have deserted my breast.

Long has the storm pour'd its weight on my nation,
 And long have her brave stood the shock;
 Long has our chieftain ennobled his station,
 A bulwark on liberty's rock—
 Unlicens'd ambition relaxes its toil,
 Yet blighted affection represses my smile.

Abroad the wild fury of winter is low'ring,
 And leafless, and drear is the tree,
 But the vertical sun of the south appears pouring
 Its fierce killing heats upon me—
 Without all the season's chill symptoms begin,
 But the fire of passion is raging within.

Frances abandoned her whole soul to the suppressed melody of the music, though the language of the song expressed a mean-

ing, which, united with certain events of that and the preceding day, left a sensation of uneasiness in the bosom of the warm-hearted girl, to which she had hitherto been a stranger. Isabella moved from the window as her last tones melted on the ear of her admiring listener, and, for the first time, her eye rested on the face of the palid maiden. A glow of fire lighted the countenances of both at the same instant, and the blue eye of Frances met the brilliant black one of her guest for a single moment, and both fell in abashed confusion on the carpet; they advanced, however, until they met, and had taken each other's hand, before either ventured again to look her companion in the face.

“This sudden change in the weather, and perhaps the situation of my brother, have united to make me melancholy, Miss Wharton,” said Isabella in a low tone, and in a voice that trembled as she spoke.

“’Tis thought you have little to apprehend for your brother,” said Frances, in

the same embarrassed manner; “had you seen him when he was brought in by Major Dunwoodie”—

Frances paused with a feeling of conscious shame, for which she could not account herself, and in raising her eyes, she saw Isabella studying her countenance, with an earnestness that again drove the blood tumultuously to her temples.

“You were speaking of Major Dunwoodie,” said Isabella faintly.

“He was with Captain Singleton.”

“Do you know Dunwoodie—have you seen him often?” continued Isabella, in a voice that startled her companion. Once more Frances ventured to look her guest in the face, and again she met the piercing eyes bent on her, as if to search her inmost heart. “Speak, Miss Wharton, is Major Dunwoodie known to you?”

“He is my relative,” said Frances, appalled at the manner of the other.

“A relative!” echoed Miss Singleton; “in what degree—speak, Miss Wharton, I conjure you to speak.”

“Our parents were cousins,” replied Frances, in still greater confusion at the vehemence of Isabella.

“And he is to be your husband,” cried the stranger impetuously.

Frances felt her pride awakened by this direct attack upon the delicacy of her feelings, and she raised her eyes from the floor to her interrogator a little proudly, when the pale cheek and quivering lip of Isabella removed her resentment in a moment.

“It is true—my conjecture is true—speak to me, Miss Wharton—I conjure you, in mercy to my feelings, to tell me—do you love Dunwoodie?” There was a plaintive earnestness in the voice of Miss Singleton, that disarmed Frances of all resentment, and the only answer she could make was hiding her burning face between her hands, as she sunk back in a chair to conceal her confusion.

Isabella paced the floor in silence for several minutes, until she had succeeded in conquering the violence of her feelings;

when she approached the place where Frances yet sat, endeavouring to exclude the eyes of her companion from reading the shame expressed in her countenance, and taking the hand of the maid, she spoke with an evident effort at composure.

“Pardon me, Miss Wharton, if my ungovernable feelings have led me into impropriety—the powerful motive—the cruel reason”—she hesitated. Frances now raised her face, and the eyes of the maids once more met—they fell in each other’s arms, and laid their burning cheeks together—the embrace was long—was ardent and sincere—but neither spoke; and, on separating, Frances retired to her own room without farther explanation.

While this extraordinary scene was acting in the room of Miss Singleton, matters of great importance were agitated in the drawing-room. The disposition of the fragments of such a dinner as the one we have recorded, was a task that required no little exertion and calculation. Notwithstanding several of the small game had

nestled in the pocket of Captain Lawton's man, and even the assistant of Dr. Sitgreaves had calculated the uncertainty of his remaining long in such good quarters, still there was more left unconsumed than the prudent spinster knew how to dispose of to advantage. Cæsar and his mistress had, therefore, a long and confidential communication on this important business; and the consequence was, that Colonel Wellmere was left to the hospitality of Sarah Wharton. All the ordinary topics of conversation were exhausted, when the colonel, with a little of the uneasiness that is in some degree inseparable from conscious error, touched lightly on the transactions of the preceding day.

"We little thought, Miss Wharton, when I first saw this Mr. Dunwoodie in your house in Queen-street, that he was to be the renowned warrior he has proved himself," said Wellmere, endeavouring to smile contemptuously.

"Renowned, when we consider the enemy he overcame," said Sarah, with con-

sideration for her companion's feelings. " 'Twas most unfortunate indeed, in every respect, that you met with the accident, or doubtless the arms of our prince would have triumphed in their usual manner."

" And yet the pleasure of such society as this accident has introduced me to, would more than repay the pain of a mortified spirit and wounded body," added the colonel, in a manner of peculiar softness.

" I hope the latter is but trifling," said Sarah, stooping to hide her blushes under the pretext of biting a thread from the work on her knee.

" Trifling, indeed, to the former," returned the colonel in the same manner. " Ah ! Miss Wharton, it is in such moments we feel the full value of friendship and sympathy."

Those who have never tried it cannot easily imagine, what a rapid progress a warm-hearted female can make in love, in the short space of half an hour, particularly where there is a predisposition to the distemper. Sarah found the conversation,

when it began to touch on friendship and sympathy, too interesting to venture her voice with a reply. She, however, turned her eyes on the colonel, and saw him gazing at her fine face with an admiration that was quite as manifest, and much more soothing, than any words could make it.

Their *tete-a-tete* was uninterrupted for an hour ; and although nothing that would be called decided by an experienced matron was said by the gentleman, he uttered a thousand things that delighted his companion for the moment, who retired to her rest with a lighter heart than she had felt since the arrest of her brother by the Americans.

CHAPTER V.

And let me the canakin clink, clink,
And let me the canakin clink:

A soldier's a man ;

A life's but a span ;

Why then, let a soldier drink.

Iago.

THE position held by the corps of dragoons, we have already said, was a favorite place of halting with their commander. A cluster of some half dozen small and dilapidated buildings formed what, from the circumstance of two roads intersecting each other at right angles, was called the village of the four corners. As usual, one of the most imposing of these edifices had been termed, in the language of the day, "a house of entertainment for man and beast." On a rough board, suspended

from the gallows-looking post that had supported the ancient sign, was, however, written in red chalk, "Elizabeth Flanagan, her hotel;" an ebullition of wit from some of the idle wags of the corps. The matron, whose name had thus been exalted to an office of such unexpected dignity, ordinarily discharged the duties of a female sutler, washerwoman, and, to use the language of Katy Haynes, bitch-doctor to the troops: she was the widow of a soldier, who had been killed in the service, and who, like herself, was a native of a distant island, that had early tried his fortune in the colonies of North-America. She constantly migrated with the troops; and it was seldom that they became stationary for two days at a time, but the little cart of the bustling woman was seen driving into their encampment, loaded with such articles as she conceived would make her presence most welcome. With a celerity that seemed almost supernatural, Betty took up her ground, and commenced her occupation; sometimes the cart itself was her shop;

at others, the soldiers made her a rude shelter of such materials as offered ; but, on the present occasion, she had seized on a vacant building, and by dint of stuffing the dirty breeches and half-dried linen of the troopers in the broken windows, to exclude the cold which had now become severe, she formed what she herself had pronounced to be " most iligant lodgings." The men were quartered in the adjacent barns ; and the officers collected in the " Hotel Flanagan," which they facetiously called head-quarters. Betty was well known to every trooper in the corps, could call each by his christian or nick-name, as best suited her fancy ; and although absolutely intolerable to all whom habit had not made familiar with her virtues, was a general favorite with these partizan warriors. Her faults were, a trifling love of liquor, excessive filthiness, and a total disregard to all the decencies of language ; her virtues, an unbounded love for her adopted country, perfect honesty when dealing on certain known principles with

the soldiery, and great good nature: added to these, Betty had the merit of being the inventor of that beverage which is so well known at the present hour, to all the patriots who make a winter's march between the commercial and political capitals of this great state, and which is distinguished by the name of "cock-tail." Elizabeth Flanagan was peculiarly well qualified by education and circumstances to perfect this improvement in liquors, having been literally brought up on its principal ingredient, and having acquired from her Virginia customers the use of mint, from its flavour in a julep, to its height of renown in the article in question. Such, then, was the mistress of the mansion, who, reckless of the cold northern blasts, showed her blooming face from the door of the building to welcome the arrival of her favorite, Captain Lawton, and his companion, her master in matters of surgery.

"Ah! by my hopes of promotion, my gentle Elizabeth, but you are welcome,"

cried the trooper, as he threw himself from his saddle ; “ this villanous fresh-water gas from the Canadas has been whistling among my bones till they ache with the cold ; but the sight of your fiery countenance is as cheering as a Christmas fire.”

“ Now, sure, Captain Jack, you are always full of your complimentaries,” replied the sutler, taking the bridle of her customer ; “ but hurry in for the life of you, darling ; the fences hereabouts are not so strong as in the Highlands, and there’s that within will warm both sowl and body.”

“ So you have been laying the rails under contribution, I see ; well, that may do for the body,” said the captain coolly ; “ but I have had a pull at a bottle of cut glass with a silver stand, and don’t think I could relish your whiskey for a month to come.”

“ If it’s silver or goold that your thinking of, it’s but little I have, though I’ve a trifling bit of the continental,” said Betty,

with a look of much meaning; "but there's that within that's fit to be put in vessels of di'monds."

"What can she mean, Archibald?" asked Lawton quickly: "the animal looks as if she meant more than she says."

"'Tis probably a wandering of the reasoning powers, created by the frequency of intoxicating draughts," observed the surgeon coolly, as he deliberately threw his left leg over the pommel of his saddle, and slid down on the right side of his horse.

"Faith, my dear jewel of a doctor, but it was this side I was expecting you; the whole corps come down on this side but yourself," said Betty, winking at the trooper; "but I've been feeding the wounded, in your absence, with the fat of the land."

"Barbarous stupidity!" cried the panic-stricken physician, "to feed men labouring under the excitement of fever with powerful nutriment; woman, woman, you

are enough to defeat the skill of Hippocrates himself."

"Pooh!" said Betty, with infinite composure, "what a botheration you make about a little whiskey; there was but a gallon betwixt a good two dozen of them, and I gave it to the boys to make them sleep easy; sure jist as slumbering drops."

Lawton and his companion now entered the building, and the first objects which met their eyes explained the hidden meaning of Betty's comfortable declaration. A long table, made of boards torn from the side of an out-building, was stretched through the middle of the largest apartment or bar-room, and on it was a very scanty display of crockery ware. The steams of cooking arose from an adjoining kitchen, but the principal attraction was a demi-john of fair proportions, which had been ostentatiously placed on high by Betty as the object most worthy of notice. Lawton soon learnt that it was teeming with the real amber-coloured juice of the

grape, and had been sent from the Locusts as an offering to Major Dunwoodie, from his friend Captain Wharton of the royal army.

“And a royal gift it is,” said the grinning subaltern who made the explanation. “The major gives us an entertainment in honour of our victory, and you see the principal expense is borne, as it should be, by the enemy. Zounds, I am thinking that, after we have primed with such stuff, we should charge through Sir Henry’s head-quarters, and carry off the knight himself.”

The captain of dragoons was in no manner displeased at the prospect of terminating so pleasantly a day that had been so agreeably commenced; he was soon surrounded by his comrades, who made many eager inquiries concerning his adventures, while the surgeon proceeded, with certain quakings of the heart, to examine into the state of his wounded. Enormous fires were crackling in the chimneys of the house, superseding the necessity of

candles, by the bright light which was thrown from the blazing piles. The group within were all young men, and tried soldiers; in number they were rather more than a dozen, and their manners and conversation were a strange mixture of the bluntness of the partizan with the polish of gentlemen. Their dresses were neat, though plain; and a never-failing topic amongst them was the performance and quality of their horses: some were endeavouring to sleep on the benches which lined the walls, some were walking the apartments, and others were seated in earnest discussion on subjects connected with the business of their lives. Occasionally as the door of the kitchen opened, the hissing sounds of the frying-pans, and the inviting savour of the food, created a stagnation in all other employments; even the sleepers, at such moments, would open their eyes and raise their heads to reconnoitre the state of the preparations. All this time Dunwoodie sat by himself gazing at the fire, and lost in reflections that none

of his officers presumed to disturb : he had made earnest inquiries of Sitgreaves, on his entrance, after the condition of Singleton, during which a profound and respectful silence was maintained in the room ; but as soon as he had ended, and resumed his seat, the usual ease and freedom prevailed.

The arrangement of the table was a matter of but little concern to Mrs. Flanagan, and Cæsar would have been sadly scandalized at witnessing the informality with which various dishes, each bearing a wonderful resemblance to the others, were placed before so many gentlemen of consideration. In taking their places at the board, the strictest attention was paid to precedence ; for, notwithstanding the freedom of manners which prevailed in the corps, the points of military etiquette were at all times observed, with something approaching to religious veneration. Most of the guests had been fasting too long to be in any degree fastidious in their appetites ;

but the case was different with Captain Lawton ; he felt an unaccountable loathing at the exhibition of Betty's food, and could not refrain from making a few passing comments on the condition of the knives, and the clouded colourings of the plates. The good nature and personal affection of Betty for the offender, restrained her for some time from answering to his innuendos, until Lawton, with a yawn, ventured to admit a piece of the black meat before him into his mouth, where, either from sated appetite, or qualities inherent in the food, much time was spent in vain efforts at mastication, when he cried with some spleen—

“ What kind of animal might this have been when living, Mrs. Flanagan ? ”

“ Sure, captain, and wasn't it the ould cow,” replied the suttler, with an emotion, that proceeded partly from dissatisfaction at the complaints of her favourite, and partly from grief at the loss of the deceased.

“What!” roared the trooper, stopping short as he was happily about to swallow his morsel, “ancient Jenny!”

“The devil!” cried another, dropping his knife and fork; “she who made the campaign of the Jerseys with us?”

“The very same,” replied the mistress of the hotel, with a most piteous aspect of woe; “sure, gentlemen, ’tis awful to have to eat sitch an ould frind.”

“And has she sunk to this?” said Lawton, pointing with his knife to the remnants on the table.

“Nay, captain,” said Betty with spirit, “I sould two of her quarters to some of your troop; but divil the word did I tell the boys what an ould frind it was they had bought, for fear it might damage their appetites.”

“Fury!” cried the trooper, with affected anger, “I shall have my fellows as limber as supple-jacks on such fare: afraid of an Englishman as a Virginia negro is of his driver.”

“ Well,” said Lieutenant Mason, dropping his knife and fork in a kind of despair, “ my jaws have more sympathy than many men’s hearts. They absolutely decline making any impression on the relics of their old acquaintance.”

“ Try a drop of the gift,” said Betty soothingly, pouring a large allowance of the wine into a bowl, and drinking it off as taster to the corps. “ Faith, ’tis but a wishy-washy sort of stuff after all.”

The ice once broken, however, a clear glass of wine was handed to Dunwoodie, who, bowing to his companions, drank the liquor in the midst of a profound silence. For a few glasses there was much formality observed, and sundry patriotic toasts and sentiments were duly noticed by the company. The liquor, however, performed its wonted office ; and, before the second sentinel at their door had been relieved, all recollection of the dinner and their cares were lost in the present festivity. Dr. Sitgreaves had not returned in season to par-

take of Jenny, but had come in time to receive his fair proportion of Captain Wharton's present.

"A song—a song from Captain Lawton," cried two or three of the party in a breath, on observing the failure of some of the points of good fellowship in the trooper; "silence, for the song of Captain Lawton."

"Gentlemen," returned Lawton, his dark eyes swimming with the bumper he had finished, though his head was as impenetrable as a post, "I am not much of a nightingale, but, under the favor of your good wishes, I consent to comply with the demand."

"Now, Jack," said Sitgreaves, nodding on his seat, "remember the air I taught you, and—stop, I have a copy of the words in my pocket."

"Forbear—forbear, good doctor," said the trooper, filling his glass with great deliberation, "I never could wheel round those hard names. Gentlemen, I will give you an humble attempt of my own."

“ Silence, for Captain Lawton’s song,”
 roared five or six at once, when the trooper
 proceeded, in a fine full tone, to sing the
 following words to a well-known baccha-
 nalian air ; several of his comrades helping
 him through the chorus with a fervour
 that shook the crazy edifice they were in :

Now push the mug, my jolly boys,
 And live, while live we can,
 To-morrow’s sun may end your joys,
 For brief’s the hour of man.
 And he who bravely meets the foe
 His lease of life can never know.

Old mother Flanagan,
 Come and fill the can again,
 For you can fill, and we can swill,
 Good Betty Flanagan.

If love of life pervades your breast,
 Or love of ease your frame,
 Quit honor’s path, for peaceful rest,
 And bear a coward’s name ;
 For soon and late we danger know,
 And fearless on the saddle go,
 Old mother, &c.

When foreign foes invade the land,
 And wives and sweethearts call :
 In freedom’s cause we’ll bravely stand,
 Or will as bravely fall.
 In this fair home the fates have given,
 We’ll live as lords, or live in heaven.
 Old mother, &c.

At each appeal made to herself, by the united voices of the choir, Betty invariably advanced; and complied literally with the request contained in the chorus, to the infinite delight of the singers, and perhaps with no small participation in the satisfaction on her own account. The hostess was provided with a beverage more suited to the high seasoning she had accustomed her palate to, than the tasteless present of Captain Wharton; by which means Betty had managed, with tolerable facility, to keep even pace with the exhilaration of her guests. The applause received by Captain Lawton was general, with the exception of the surgeon, who rose from the bench during the first chorus, and paced the floor, in a fine glow of classical indignation. The bravos and bravissimo's drowned all other noises for a short time; but, as they gradually ceased, the doctor turned to the musician, and exclaimed, with manifest heat—

“Captain Lawton, I marvel that a gentleman, and a gallant officer, can find no

other subject for his muse, in these times of trial, than in such beastly invocations to that notorious follower of the camp, the filthy Elizabeth Flanagan. Methinks the Goddess of Liberty could furnish a more noble inspiration, and the sufferings of your country a more befitting theme."

"Hey-day!" shouted the hostess, advancing upon him in a most threatening attitude, "and who is it that calls me filthy? Master Squirt, Master Pop-gun—"

"Peace," said Dunwoodie, in a voice that was exerted but a little more than common, but which was succeeded by the stillness of death; "woman, leave the room. Dr. Sitgreaves, I call you to your seat, to wait the order of the revels."

"Proceed—proceed," said the surgeon, drawing himself up in an attitude of dignified composure; "I trust, Major Dunwoodie, I am not unacquainted with the rules of decorum, nor ignorant of the by-laws of good-fellowship." Betty made a hasty but somewhat devious retreat to her own dominions, being unaccustomed to

dispute the orders of the commanding-officer.

“Major Dunwoodie will honour us with a sentimental song,” said Lawton, bowing to his leader, with the politeness of a gentleman, and the collected manner he so well knew how to assume.

The Major hesitated a moment, and then sung, with fine execution, the following words :

Some love the heats of southern suns,
Where life's warm current mad'ning runs,
In one quick circ'ling stream ;
But dearer far's the mellow light,
Which trembling shine, reflected bright
In Luna's milder beams.

Some love the tulip's gaudier dyes,
Where deep'ning blue with yellow vies,
And gorgeous beauty glows ;
But happier he, whose bridal wreath,
By love entwined, is found to breathe
The sweetness of the rose.

The voice of Dunwoodie never lost its authority with his inferiors, and the applause which followed his song, though by no means so riotous as that which succeeded the effort of the captain, was much more flattering.

“If, sir,” said the doctor, after joining in the plaudits of his companions, “you would but learn to unite classical allusions with your delicate imaginations, you would become a pretty amateur poet.”

“He who criticizes ought to be able to perform,” said Dunwoodie, with a smile ; “I call on Dr. Sitgreaves for a specimen of the style he admires.”

“Dr. Sitgreaves’ song—Dr. Sitgreaves’ song,” echoed all at the table, with delight : “a classical ode from Dr. Sitgreaves.”

The surgeon made a complacent bow of acquiescence, took the remnant of his glass, and gave a few preliminary hems, that served hugely to delight three or four young cornets at the foot of the table. He then commenced singing in a cracked voice, and to any thing but a tune, the following ditty—

Hast thou ever felt love’s dart, dearest,
 Or breathed his trembling sigh—
 Thought him, afar, was ever nearest,
 Before that sparkling eye,
 Then hast thou known, what ’tis to feel
 The pain that Galen could not heal.

"Hurrah!" shouted Lawton, in a burst of applause, "Archibald eclipses the muses themselves; his words flow like the sylvan stream by moonlight, and his melody is a cross breed of the nightingale and the owl."

"Captain Lawton," cried the exasperated operator, "it is one thing to despise the lights of classical learning, and another to be despised for your own ignorance."

A loud summons at the door of the building created a dead halt in the uproar, and the dragoons instinctively caught up their arms, to be prepared for any intruders. The door was opened, and the skinners entered, dragging in the pedlar, bending under the load of his pack.

"Which is Captain Lawton?" said the leader of the gang, gazing around him in some little astonishment.

"He waits your pleasure," said the trooper, drily, and with infinite composure.

"Then here I deliver to your hands a condemned traitor: this is Harvey Birch, the pedlar-spy."

Lawton started as he looked his old ac-

quaintance in the face, and, turning to the skinner with a lowering look, continued—

“ And who are you, sir, that speak so freely of your neighbours ?” bowing to Dunwoodie ; “ but your pardon, sir ; here is the commanding officer, to him you will please to address yourself.”

“ No,” said the man sullenly, “ it is to you I deliver the pedlar, and from you I claim my reward.”

“ Are you Harvey Birch ?” said Dunwoodie, advancing with an air of authority, that instantly drove the skinner to a corner of the room.

“ I am,” said Birch proudly.

“ And a traitor to your country,” continued the major with sternness ; “ do you know that I should be justified in ordering your execution this night.”

“ ‘Tis not the will of God to send a soul so hastily to his presence,” said the pedlar with solemnity.

“ You speak truth,” said Dunwoodie ; “ and a few brief hours shall be added to your life ; but as your offence is most

odious to a soldier, so it will be sure to meet with the soldier's vengeance : you die to-morrow."

" 'Tis as God wills," returned Harvey, without moving a muscle.

" I have spent many a good hour to entrap the villain," said the skinner, advancing a little from his corner, " and I hope you will give me a certificate that will entitle us to the reward ; 'twas promised to be paid in gold."

" Major Dunwoodie," said the officer of the day, entering the room, " the patrols report a house to be burnt, near yesterday's battle-ground."

" 'Twas the hut of the pedlar," muttered the leader of the gang ; " we have not left him a shingle for shelter ; I should have burnt it months ago, but I wanted his shed for a trap to catch the sly fox in."

" You seem a most ingenious patriot," said Lawton, with extreme gravity ; " Major Dunwoodie, I second the request of this worthy gentleman, and crave the office of

bestowing the reward on him and his fellows."

"Take it ;" cried the major, "and you, miserable man, prepare for that fate which will surely await you before the setting of to-morrow's sun."

"Life offers but little to tempt me with," said Harvey, slowly raising his eyes, and gazing wildly at the strange faces in the apartment.

"Come, worthy children of America," said Lawton, "follow, and receive your reward."

The gang eagerly accepted this invitation, and followed the captain towards the quarters assigned to his troop. Dunwoodie paused a moment, from reluctance to triumph over a fallen foe, and proceeded with great solemnity—

"You have already been tried, Harvey Birch, and the truth has proved you to be an enemy, too dangerous to the liberties of America, to be suffered to live."

"The truth !" echoed the pedlar, start-

ing, and raising himself proudly, in a manner that regarded the weight of his pack as nothing.

“ Ay, the truth—you were charged with loitering near the continental army, to gain intelligence of its movements, and, by communicating it to the enemy, to enable him to frustrate the intentions of Washington.”

“ Will Washington say so, think you ?” said Birch, with a ghastly smile.

“ Doubtless he would—even the justice of Washington condemns you.”

“ No—no—no,” cried the pedlar, in a voice, and with a manner that startled Dunwoodie; “ Washington can see beyond the hollow views of pretended patriots. Has he not risked his all on the cast of the die?—if a gallows is ready for me, was there not one for him also? no—no—no, Washington would never say, ‘ Lead him to a gallows.’ ”

“ Have you any thing, wretched man, to urge to the commander in chief, why you should not die ?” said the major, recovering

from the surprise created by the manner of the other.

Birch trembled with the violence of the emotions that were contending in his bosom ; his face assumed the ghastly paleness of death, and his hand drew a box of tin from the folds of his shirt : he opened it, and its contents was a small piece of paper—his eye was for an instant fixed on it—he had already held it towards Dunwoodie, when suddenly withdrawing his hand, he exclaimed—

“ No, it dies with me ; I know the conditions of my service, and will not purchase life with their forfeiture—it dies with me.”

“ Deliver that paper, and you may possibly yet find favour,” said Dunwoodie eagerly ; expecting a discovery of importance to the cause.

“ It dies with me,” repeated Birch, a flush passing over his pallid features, and lighting them with extraordinary brilliancy.

“ Seize the traitor,” cried the major hastily, “ and wrest the secret from his hands.”

The order was immediately obeyed ; but the movements of the pedlar was too quick for them ; in an instant he swallowed it. The officers paused in astonishment, at the readiness and energy of the spy ; but the surgeon cried eagerly—

“ Hold him while I administer an emetic.”

“ Forbear,” said Dunwoodie, beckoning him back with his hand ; “ if his crime is great, so will his punishment be heavy.”

“ Lead on,” cried the pedlar, dropping his pack from his shoulders, and advancing towards the door with a manner of incomprehensible dignity.

“ Whither?” asked Dunwoodie in amazement.

“ To the gallows.”

“ No,” said the major, recoiling in horror at his own justice. “ My duty requires that I order you to be executed ; but surely not so hastily ; take until nine to-morrow to prepare for the awful change you are to undergo.”

“ Dunwoodie whispered his orders in the

ear of a subaltern, and motioned to the pedlar to withdraw. The interruption caused by this scene prevented further enjoyment around the table, and the officers dispersed to their several places of rest. In a short time the only noise to be heard was the heavy tread of the sentinel, as he paced over the frozen ground, in front of the Hotel Flanagan.

CHAPTER VI.

“ — There are, whose changing lineaments
 Express each guileless passion of the breast,
 Where Love, and Hope, and tender-hearted Pity,
 Shine forth, reflected, as from the mirror's surface :
 But cold experience can veil these hues
 With looks, invented, shrewdly to encompass
 The cunning purposes of base deceit.”

Duo.

THE officer, to whose keeping Dun-
 woodie had committed the pedlar, trans-
 ferred his charge to the custody of the
 regular sergeant of the guard. The gift
 of Captain Wharton had not been lost on
 the youthful lieutenant ; and a certain
 dancing motion, that had unaccountably
 taken possession of objects before his eyes,
 gave him warning of the necessity of re-
 cruiting nature by sleep. After admonish-
 ing the non-commissioned guardian of
 Harvey to omit no watchfulness in secur-

ing the prisoner, the youth wrapped himself in his cloak, and, stretched on a bench before a fire, sought, and soon found, the repose he needed. A rude shed extended the whole length of the rear of the building, and from off one of its ends had been partitioned a small apartment, that was intended as a repository for many of the lesser implements of husbandry. The lawless times had, however, occasioned its being stript of every thing of any value; and the searching eyes of Betty Flanagan selected this spot, on her arrival, as the store-house for her moveables, and a withdrawing-room for her person. The spare arms and baggage of the corps had also been deposited here; and the united treasures were placed under the eye of the sentinel, who paraded the shed as guardian to the rear of the head-quarters. A second warrior, who was stationed near the house to protect the horses of the officers, could command a view of the outside of the apartment, and, as it was without window, or outlet of any kind, excepting its door,

the considerate sergeant thought this the most befitting place in which to deposit his charge, until the moment of his execution. There were several inducements that urged Sergeant Hollister to this determination; among which was the absence of the washerwoman, who lay before the kitchen-fire, dreaming that the corps were attacking a party of the enemy, and mistaking the noise which proceeded from her own nose for the bugles of the Virginians sounding the charge. Another was the peculiar opinions that the veteran entertained of life and death, and by which he was distinguished in the corps as a man of most exemplary piety and holiness of life. The sergeant was more than fifty years of age, and for half that period had borne arms as a profession. The constant recurrence of sudden deaths before his eyes had produced an effect on him differing greatly from that, which was the usual moral consequence of such scenes, and he had become not only the most steady, but the most trust-worthy soldier in his troop.

Captain Lawton had rewarded his fidelity by making him its orderly.

Followed by Birch, the sergeant proceeded in silence to the door of the intended prison, and throwing it open with one hand, held a lantern with the other, to light the pedlar as he entered. Seating himself on a cask that contained some of Betty's favourite beverage, the sergeant motioned to Birch to occupy another in the same manner. The lantern was placed on the floor, and the dragoon, after looking his prisoner steadily in the face, observed—

“ You look as if you would meet death like a man, and I have brought you to a spot where you can fix things to suit yourself, and be quiet and undisturbed.”

“ 'Tis a fearful place to prepare for the last change in,” said Harvey, shuddering, and gazing around his little prison with a vacant eye.

“ Why, for the matter of that,” returned the veteran, “ it can reckon but little in the great account where a man parades his thoughts for the last review, so that he

finds them fit to pass the muster of another world. I have a small book here, which I make it a point to read a little in, whenever we are about to engage, and I find it a great strengthener in time of need." While speaking, he took a Bible from his pocket, and offered it to the acceptance of the pedlar. Birch received the volume with habitual reverence; but there was an abstracted air about him, and a wandering of the eye, that induced his companion to think that alarm was getting the mastery over the pedlar's feelings: accordingly, he proceeded in what he conceived to be the offices of consolation.

"If there's any thing that lies heavy on your mind, now is the best time to get rid of it: if you have done wrong to any one, I promise you, on the word of an honest dragoon, to lend you a helping hand to see them righted."

"There are few who have not done so," said the pedlar, turning his vacant gaze once more on his companion.

"True; 'tis natural to sin; but it some-

times happens that a man does, what at other times he may be sorry for. One would not wish to die with any very heavy sin on his conscience, after all."

Harvey had by this time thoroughly examined the place in which he was to pass the night, and saw no means of escape. But hope is ever the last feeling to desert the human breast, and the pedlar gave the dragoon more of his attention, fixing on his sun-burnt features such searching looks, that Sergeant Hollister lowered his eyes before the wild expression which he met in the gaze of the prisoner.

"I have been taught to lay the burden of my sins at the feet of my Saviour," replied the pedlar.

"Why, yes, all that is well enough," returned the other; "but justice should be done while there is opportunity. There have been stirring times in this county since the war began, and many have been deprived of their rightful goods. I oftentimes find it hard to reconcile my lawful plunder to a tender conscience."

"These hands," said the pedlar, stretching forth his meagre bony fingers, and speaking with an unusual pride, "have spent years in toil, but not a moment in pilfering."

"It is well that it is so," said the honest-hearted soldier; "and, no doubt, you now feel it a great consolation—there are three great sins, that if a man can keep his conscience clear of, why, by the mercy of God, he may hope to pass muster with the saints in heaven—they are, stealing, murdering, and desertion."

"Thank God!" said Birch, with fervor, "I have never yet taken the life of a fellow-creature."

"As to killing a man in lawful battle, why that is no more than doing one's duty," interrupted the sergeant, who was a close imitator of Captain Lawton in the field. "If the cause is wrong, the sin of such a deed you know falls on the nation, and a man receives his punishment here with the rest of the people: but murdering in cold

blood stands next to desertion, as a crime, in the eye of God."

"I never was a soldier, therefore never could desert," said the pedlar, resting his face on his hand in a melancholy attitude.

"Why desertion consists of more than quitting your colours, though that is certainly the worst kind," continued the dragoon, speaking slowly, and with some emphasis—"A man may desert his country, in the hour of her utmost need."

Birch buried his face in both his hands, and his whole frame shook with violent agitation; the sergeant regarded him closely, but good feeling soon got the better of his antipathies, and he continued more mildly—

"But still that is a sin which I think may be forgiven, if sincerely repented of; and it matters but little when or how a man dies, so that he dies like a Christian and a man. I recommend you to say your prayers, and then get some rest, in order that you may do both. There is no hope

of your being pardoned, as Colonel Singleton has sent down the most positive orders to take your life whenever we met you. No—no—nothing can save you.”

“You say the truth,” cried Birch. “It is now too late. I have destroyed my only safeguard. But *He* will do my memory justice at least.”

“What safeguard?” asked the sergeant, with awakened curiosity.

“’Tis nothing,” replied the pedlar, recovering his natural manner, and lowering his face to avoid the earnest looks of his companion.

“And who is he?”

“No one,” added Harvey, evidently anxious to say no more.

“Nothing, and no one, can avail but little now,” said the sergeant, rising to go; “lay yourself on the blanket of Mrs. Flanagan, and get a little sleep—I will call you betimes in the morning, and, from the bottom of my soul, I wish I could be of some service to you, for I dislike greatly to see a man hung up like a dog.”

“ Then *you* might save me from this ignominious death,” said Birch, springing on his feet, and catching the dragoon by the arm—“ And, oh! what will I not give you in reward.”

“ In what manner?” asked the sergeant, looking at him in surprise.

“ See,” said the pedlar, producing several guineas from his person; “ these are but as nothing to what I will give you, if you will assist me to escape.”

“ Was you the man whose picture is on the gold, I would not listen to such a crime,” said the trooper, throwing the money on the floor with cool contempt. “ Go—go—poor wretch, and make your peace with God; for it is he only that can be of service to you now.”

The sergeant took up the lantern, and, with some indignation in his manner, left the pedlar to his sorrowful meditations on his approaching fate. Birch sunk in momentary despair on the pallet of Betty, while his guardian proceeded to give the necessary instructions to the sentinels for his safe keeping.

“Suffer no one to speak to your prisoner, and your life will depend on his not escaping,” Hollister concluded his injunctions with, to the man in the shed.

“But,” said the trooper, “my orders are, to let the washerwoman pass in and out, as she pleases.”

“Well, let her then; but be careful that this wily pedlar does not get out in the folds of her petticoats.” He then continued his walk, giving similar orders to all of the sentinels near the spot.

For some time after the departure of the sergeant, silence prevailed within the solitary prison of the pedlar, until the dragoon at his door heard his loud breathings, which soon rose into the regular cadence of one in a deep sleep; and the man continued walking his post, musing on the indifference to life, which could allow nature its customary rest, even on the threshold of the grave. Harvey Birch had, however, been too long a name held in detestation by every man in the corps, to suffer any feelings of commiseration to min-

gle with these reflections of the sentinel ; and, notwithstanding the consideration and kindness manifested by the sergeant, there was not, probably, another man of his rank in the whole party who would have discovered equal benevolence to the prisoner, or who would not have imitated the veteran in rejecting the bribe, although probably from a less worthy motive. There was something of disappointed vengeance in the feelings of the man who watched the door of the room, on finding his prisoner enjoying a sleep that he himself was deprived of, and at his exhibiting such obvious indifference to the utmost penalty that military rigour could inflict on all his treason to the cause of liberty and America. More than once he felt prompted to disturb this unwonted repose of the pedlar by taunts and revilings ; but the discipline he was under, and a secret sense of shame at its brutality, held him in subjection.

His meditations were, however, soon interrupted by the appearance of the washer-woman, who came staggering through the

door that communicated with the kitchen, muttering execrations against the servants of the officers, who, by their waggery, had disturbed her slumbers before the fire. The sentinel understood enough of her maledictions to comprehend the case; but all his efforts to enter into conversation with the enraged woman were useless, and he suffered her to enter her room without explaining that it contained another inmate. The noise of her huge frame falling on the bed, was succeeded by a silence that was soon interrupted by the renewed breathing of the pedlar, and within a few minutes Harvey continued to breathe aloud, as if no interruption had occurred. The relief arriving at this moment, the fellow, who felt excessively nettled at the contempt of the pedlar, after communicating his orders, exclaimed to the other, as he returned to the guard-room—

“ You may keep yourself warm by dancing, John; the pedlar-spy has tuned his fiddle you hear, and it will not be

long before Betty will strike up in her turn."

The joke was followed by a general laugh from the party, who marched on in the performance of their duty. At this instant the door of the prison was opened, and Betty re-appeared, staggering back again towards her former quarters.

"Stop," said the sentinel, catching her by her clothes; "are you sure the spy is not in your pocket?"

"Can't you hear the rascal snoring in my room, you dirty blackguard," sputtered Betty, her whole frame shaking with the violence of her rage, "and is it so you would sarve a dacent female, that a man must be put to sleep in the room with her, you rapscallion."

"Pooh! what do you mind a man who's to be hung in the morning for; you see he sleeps already; to-morrow he'll take a longer nap."

"Hands off, you villain," cried the washerwoman, relinquishing a small bot-

tle that the fellow had succeeded in wresting from her. "But I'll go to Captain Jack, and know if it's his orders to put a hang-gallows spy in my room, ay even in my widow'd bed, you thief."

"Silence, you old Jezebel," said the fellow, with a laugh, taking the bottle from his mouth to breathe, "or you will wake the gentleman—would you disturb a man in his last sleep?"

"I'll awake Captain Jack, you riprobrate villain, and bring him here to see me righted: he will punish you all for imposing on a dacent widow'd body, you marauder."

With these words, which only extorted a laugh from the sentinel, Betty staggered round the end of the building, and made the best of her way towards the quarters of her favourite, Captain John Lawton, for redress. Neither the officer nor the woman, however, appeared during the night, both being differently employed; and nothing further occurred to disturb

the repose of the pedlar, who, to the astonishment of the sentinel, continued apparently, by his breathing, to manifest how little the gallows could affect his slumbers.

CHAPTER VII.

“ A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—

O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!”

Merchant of Venice.

THE Skinners followed Captain Lawton with alacrity towards the quarters occupied by the troop of that gentleman. The captain of dragoons, had on all occasions manifested so much zeal for the cause in which he was engaged; was so regardless of personal danger when opposed to the enemy, and his stature and stern countenance contributed so much to render him terrific at such moments, that they had, in some measure, procured him a reputation distinct from the corps in which he served. His intrepidity was mistaken for ferocity, and his hasty zeal for the natural love of cruelty. On the other hand, a few acts of clemency, or, more properly speaking, of

discriminating justice, had with one portion of the community acquired for Dunwoodie the character of undue forbearance. It is seldom that either popular condemnation or applause falls where it is merited.

While in the presence of the Major, the leader of the gang had felt himself under that restraint which vice must ever experience in the company of acknowledged virtue; but, having left the house, he at once conceived that he was under the protection of a congenial spirit. There was a gravity in the manner of Lawton, that deceived most of those who did not know him intimately; and it was a common saying in his troop, that "when the captain laughed he was sure to punish." Drawing near his conductor, therefore, the leader commenced, with inward satisfaction, the following dialogue—

"'Tis always well for a man to know his friends from his enemies."

To this prefatory observation, the captain made no other than an assenting sound, that could not be called a word.

"I suppose Major Dunwoodie has the good opinion of Washington?" continued the Skinner, in a low confidential tone, that rather expressed a doubt than asked a question.

"There are some who think so," returned the captain, ambiguously.

"Many of the friends of Congress in this county," the man proceeded, "wish the horse was led by some other officer; for my part, if I could only be covered by a troop now and then, I could do many an important piece of service to the cause, that this capture of the pedlar would be nothing to."

"Indeed!" said the captain, drawing familiarly nigh him, and lowering his voice, "such as what?"

"For the matter of that, it could be made as profitable to the officer, as it would be to us who did it," said the Skinner, with a look of the most significant meaning.

"But how?" asked Lawton, a little impatiently, and quickening his step to get out of the hearing of the rest of the party.

“ Why, near hand to the Royal lines, even under the very guns of the heights, might be good picking, if we had a force to guard us from De Lancey’s men, and to cover our retreat from being cut off by the way of King’s-Bridge.”

“ I thought the refugees took all that game to themselves,” said the captain.

“ They do a little at it, but are obliged to be sparing among their own people,” returned the fellow in perfect confidence.

“ I have been down twice under an agreement with them : the first time they acted with honour, but the second they came upon us and drove us off, and took the plunder to themselves.”

“ That was a very dishonourable act indeed,” said Lawton ; “ I wonder that you associate with such rascals.”

“ It is necessary to have an understanding with some of them, or we might be taken,” returned the Skinner. “ But a man without honour is worse than a brute—do you think Major Dunwoodie is a man to be trusted ?”

"You mean on honourable principles," said Lawton.

"Certain; you know Arnold was thought well of, until the Royal Major was taken."

"Why, I do not believe Dunwoodie would sell his command, as Arnold wished to," said the captain; "neither do I think him exactly trust-worthy in a delicate business like your's."

"That's just my notion," rejoined the Skinner, with a self-approving manner, that showed how much he was satisfied with his own estimate of character.

By this time they had arrived at a better sort of farm-house, the very extensive out-buildings of which were in tolerable repair for the times. The barns were occupied by the men of the troop in their clothes, while their horses were arranged under the long sheds which protected the yard from the cold north wind, and were quietly eating, with their saddles on their backs, and bridles thrown on their necks, ready to be bitted at the shortest warning. Lawton excused himself for a moment to the Skin-

ner, and entered his quarters. He soon returned, holding in his hand one of the common lanterns used by the men when working on their steeds, and led the way towards the large orchard that surrounded the buildings on three sides. The gang followed their leader in silence, who suspected the object to be the facility of communicating further on this interesting topic without the danger of being overheard.

Approaching the captain, he renewed the discourse, with a view of establishing further confidence, and giving his companion a more favourable opinion of his intellects.

“Do you think the colonies will finally get the better of the King?” he inquired, with a little of the importance of a politician.

“Get the better!” echoed the captain, with impetuosity: then checking himself, he continued, “no doubt they will; if the French will give us arms and money, we can drive the Royal troops out in six months.”

“Well, so I hope we will soon,” said

the Skinner, hastily, being conscious of his having meditated joining the refugees for some time, "and then we shall have a free government, and we, who fight for it, will get our reward."

"Oh!" cried Lawton, "your claims will be indisputable, while all these vile tories, who live at home peaceably to take care of their farms, will be held in the contempt they merit. You have no farm, I suppose?"

"Not yet; but it will go hard if I do not find one before the peace is made."

"Right; study your own interests, and you study the interests of your country; press the point of your own services, and rail at the tories, and I'll bet my spurs against a rusty nail, that you get to be a county-clerk at least."

"Don't you think Paulding's party were fools in not letting the Royal Adjutant-General escape?" said the man, thrown off his guard by the freedom of the captain's manner.

"Fools!" cried Lawton, with a bitter laugh; "Aye, fools indeed; King George

would have paid them better, for he is richer. He would have made them gentlemen for their lives. But, thank God, there is a pervading spirit in the people that seems miraculous. Men, who have nothing, act as if the wealth of the Indies depended on their fidelity; all are not villains like yourself, or we should have been slaves to England years ago."

"How!" exclaimed the Skinner, starting back, and dropping his musket to the level of the other's breast, "am I betrayed then; and are you my enemy!"

"Miscreant!" shouted Lawton, his sabre ringing in his steel scabbard as he struck the musket of the fellow from his hands; "offer but again to point your gun at me, and I'll cleave you to the middle."

"And you will not pay us then, Captain Lawton?" asked the Skinner, trembling, and noticing a party of mounted dragoons silently encircling the whole party.

"O! pay you; yes; you shall have the full measure of your reward—there is the money that Colonel Singleton sent down

for the captors of the Spy," throwing a bag of guineas with disdain at the other's feet. "But ground your arms, you rascals, and see that the money is truly told."

The intimidated band did as they were ordered, and, while they were hastily employed in this pleasing avocation, a few of Lawton's men privately knocked the flints from their muskets.

"Well," cried the captain, "is it right; have you the promised reward?"

"There is just the money," said the leader, "and we will now go to our homes, with your permission."

"Hold!" returned Lawton, with his usual gravity; "so much to redeem our promise—now for justice; we pay you for taking a Spy, but we punish you for burning, robbing, and murdering—seize them, my lads, and give them each the Law of Moses—forty save one."

This command was given to no unwilling listeners, and in the twinkling of an eye the Skinners were stripped and fastened, by the halters of the party, to as

many of the apple-trees as was necessary to furnish one to each of the gang; swords were quickly drawn, and fifty branches cut from the trees like magic: from these were selected a few of the most supple of the twigs, and a willing dragoon was soon found to wield each of these new weapons. Captain Lawton gave the word, humanely cautioning his men not to exceed the discipline prescribed by the Mosaic Law, and directly the uproar of Babel commenced in the orchard. The cries of the leader were easily to be distinguished above those of his men, and the circumstance might be accounted for, by Captain Lawton's reminding his corrector that he had to deal with an officer, and he should remember and pay him unusual honour. The flagellation was executed with great neatness and despatch, and was distinguished by no irregularity, excepting that none of the disciplinarians began to count until they had tried their whips by a dozen or more blows, by the way, as they said themselves, of finding out the proper places to

strike. As soon as this summary operation was satisfactorily completed, Lawton directed his men to leave the Skinners to replace their own clothes, and to mount their horses, as they were a party who had been detailed for the purpose of patrolling lower down in the county.

“ You see, my friend,” said the captain to the leader of the Skinners, after he had prepared himself to depart, “ I can cover you to some purpose when necessary. If we meet often, you will be covered with scars, which, if not very honourable, will be at least merited.”

The fellow made no reply, but was busy with his musket, and hastening his comrades to march ; when, every thing being ready, they proceeded sullenly towards some rocks, at no great distance, which were overhung by a deep wood. The moon was just rising, and the group of dragoons could easily be distinguished where they had been left. Suddenly turning, the whole gang levelled their pieces, and drew the triggers. The action was

noticed, and the snapping of the locks was heard by the soldiers, who returned their futile attempt with a laugh of derision ; the captain crying aloud—

“ Ah ! rascals, I know you ; and have taken away your flints.”

“ You should have taken away the one in my pocket too,” shouted the leader, firing his gun in the next instant. The bullet grazed the ear of Lawton, who laughed as he shook his head, and said, “ A miss was as good as a mile.” One of the dragoons had noticed the preparations of the Skinner, who had been left alone by the rest of his gang, as soon as they had made their abortive attempt at revenge, and was in the act of plunging his spurs in his horse as the fellow fired. The distance to the rocks was but small, yet the speed of the horse compelled the leader to abandon both money and musket, to effect his escape. The soldier returned with his prizes, and offered them to the acceptance of his captain ; but Lawton rejected them coolly, telling the man to retain them

himself, until the Skinner appeared in person to claim his property. It would have been a business of no small difficulty for any tribunal then existing in the new states to have enforced a decree of restitution of the money ; for it was shortly after most equitably distributed, by the hands of Sergeant Hollister, among a troop of horse. The patrolle departed, and the captain slowly returned to his quarters, with an intent of retiring to rest. A figure moving rapidly among the trees in the direction of the wood, whither the Skinners had retired, caught his eye, and, wheeling on his heel, the cautious partisan approached it, and to his astonishment saw the washer-woman at that hour of the night, and in such a place.

“ What, Betty ! walking in your sleep, or dreaming while awake,” cried the astonished trooper ; “ are you not afraid of meeting with the ghost of ancient Jenny in this her favourite pasture ? ”

“ Ah, sure, Captain Jack,” returned the sutler, in her native accent, and reeling in

a manner that made it difficult for her to raise her head ; “ it’s not Jenny or her ghost that I am seeking, but some yarbs for the wounded. And it’s the vartue of the rising moon, as it jist touches them, that I want. They grow under yon rocks, and thither I must hasten, or the charm will lose its power.”

“ Fool, you are fitter for your pallet than wandering among those rocks ; a fall from one of them would break your bones : besides, the Skinners have fled to those heights, and, should they see you, would revenge on you a flogging they have but just now received from me. Better return, old woman, and finish your nap ; we march in the morning, I hear.”

Betty disregarded his advice, and continued her devious route to the hill-side. For an instant, as Lawton mentioned the Skinners, she had paused, but immediately resumed her course, and was soon out of sight among the trees.

On entering his quarters, the sentinel at the door inquired if he had met Mrs.

Flanagan, and told his captain she had passed there, filling the air with threats against her tormentors at the "Hotel," and inquiring for the captain in search of redress. Lawton heard the man in astonishment—appeared struck with a new idea—walked several yards towards the orchard, and returned again; for several minutes he paced rapidly to and fro before the door of the house, and then hastily entered it, threw himself on a bed in his clothes, and was soon in a profound sleep.

In the mean time the gang of marauders had successfully gained the summit of the rocks, and, scattering in every direction, buried themselves in the depths of the wood. Finding, however, they were unpursued, a thing which was impracticable for horse, the leader ventured to call his band together with a whistle, and in a short time succeeded in collecting his discomfited party at a point where they had but little to apprehend from this new enemy.

“ Well,” said one of the fellows, while a fire was lighting to protect them against the air, which was becoming severely cold, “ there is an end to our business in West-Chester. The Virginia horse will soon make the county too hot to hold us.”

“ I’ll have his blood,” muttered the leader, “ if I die for it the next instant.”

“ Oh, you are very valiant here in the wood,” cried the other, with a savage laugh ; “ why did you, who boast so much of your aim, miss your man just now, at thirty yards ?”

“ ’Twas the horseman that disturbed me, or I would have ended this Captain Lawton on the spot ; besides, the cold had set me a shivering, and I had no longer a steady hand.”

“ Say it was fear, and you will tell no lie,” said his comrade with a sneer. “ For my part, I think I shall never be cold again ; my back burns as if a thousand gridirons were laid on it, and that not very gently.”

“ And you would tamely submit to

such usage, and kiss the rod that beat you?"

"As for kissing the rod, it would be no easy matter I'm thinking," returned the other. "Yes, mine was broken into such small pieces on my own shoulders, that it would be difficult to find one big enough to kiss; but I would rather submit to losing half my skin, than to losing the whole of it, with my ears in the bargain. And such will be our fates, if we tempt this mad Virginian again. God willing, I would at any time give him enough of my hide to make a pair of jack-boots, to get out of his hands with the remainder. If you had known when you were well off, you would have stuck to Major Dunwoodie, who don't know half so much of our evil-doings."

"Silence, you talking fool," shouted the enraged leader; "your prating nonsense is sufficient to drive a man mad; is it not enough to be robbed and beaten, but we must be tormented with your folly; help to get out the provisions, if any is left in

the wallet, and try and stop your mouth with food."

This injunction was obeyed, and the whole party, amidst sundry groans and contortions, excited by the disordered state of their backs, made their arrangements for a scanty meal. A large fire of dry wood was burning in the cleft of a rock, and at length they began to recover in some measure from the confusion of their flight, and collect their scattered senses. Their hunger appeased, and many of their garments thrown aside for the better opportunity of dressing their wounds, the gang began to plot measures of revenge. An hour was spent in this manner, and various expedients were proposed; but as they all depended a good deal on personal prowess for their success, and were attended by great danger, they were of course rejected. There was no possibility of approaching the troops by surprise, their vigilance being ever on the watch; and the hope of meeting Captain Lawton away from his men was equally forlorn; for the

trooper was constantly engaged in his duty, and his movements were so rapid, that any opportunity of meeting with him at all must depend greatly on accident. Besides, it was by no means certain, that such an interview would result happily for themselves. The cunning of the trooper was notorious, and rough and broken as was West-Chester, the fearless partisan was known to take desperate leaps, and stone walls were but slight impediments before the charges of the Southern horse. Gradually, the conversation took another direction, until the gang determined on a plan which should both revenge themselves, and at the same time offer some additional stimulus to their exertions. The whole business was accurately discussed, the time fixed, and the manner adopted ; in short, nothing was wanting to the previous arrangement for this deed of villany, when they were aroused by a voice calling aloud—

“ This way, Captain Jack ; here are the rascals ating by a fire ; this way, and mur-

der the thieves where they sit ; quick, lave your horses, and shoot your pistols."

This terrific summons was enough to disturb the philosophy of the gang entirely, and, springing on their feet, they rushed deeper into the wood ; and, having already agreed upon a place of rendezvous previously to their intended expedition, they dispersed towards the four quarters of the heavens. Certain sounds and different voices were heard calling to each other ; but, as the marauders were well trained to speed of foot, they were soon lost in the distance.

It was not long before Betty Flanagan emerged from the darkness, and very coolly took possession of what the Skinners had left in their flight: these were food, and divers articles of dress. The washerwoman deliberately seated herself, and made a meal with great apparent satisfaction ; for an hour she sat with her head upon her hand in deep musing, then gathered together such articles of the clothes as seemed to suit her fancy, and retired into the wood

by herself; leaving the fire to throw its glimmering light on the adjacent rocks, until its last brand died away, and the place was abandoned to solitude and darkness.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Thou rising sun, whose gladsome ray
Invites my fair to rural play,
Dispel the mist, and clear the skies,
And bring my Orra to my eyes.

“No longer then perplex thy breast,
When thoughts torment, the first are best ;
'Tis mad to go, 'tis death to stay,
Away, to Orra, haste away.”

Lapland Love-Song.

WHILE his comrades were sleeping in perfect forgetfulness of their hardships and dangers, the slumbers of Dunwoodie were broken and unquiet. After spending a night of restlessness, he arose unrefreshed from the rude bed where he had thrown himself in his clothes, and, without awaking any of the group around him, wandered into the open air in search of relief. The soft rays of the moon were just pass-

ing away in the more distinct light of the morning ; the wind had fallen, and the rising mists gave the promise of another of those autumnal days, which, in this unstable climate, succeed a tempest with the rapid transition of magic. The hour had not arrived when he intended moving from his present position ; and willing to allow his warriors all the refreshment that circumstances would permit, he strolled towards the scene of the Skinners' punishment, musing upon the embarrassments of his situation, and uncertain how he should reconcile his sense of manly delicacy to his love. Added to this dilemma, was the dangerous situation of Henry Wharton. Although Dunwoodie himself placed the most implicit reliance on the captain's purity of intention, he was by no means assured that a board of officers would be equally credulous ; and, independent of all feelings of private regard, he felt certain that with the execution of Henry would be destroyed all hopes of an union with his sister. He had despatched an officer the preceding even-

ing to Colonel Singleton, who was in command in the advanced posts, reporting the capture of the British captain, and, after giving his own opinion of his innocence, requesting orders as to the manner in which he was to dispose of his prisoner. These orders might now be expected every hour, and his uneasiness increased, in proportion as the moment approached when his friend might be removed from his protection. In this disturbed state of mind the Major wandered through the orchard, and was stopped in his walk by arriving at the base of those rocks which had protected the Skinners in their flight, before he was conscious whither his steps had carried him. He was about to turn, and retrace his path to his quarters, when he was startled with a voice bidding him to—

“ Stand, or die !”

Dunwoodie turned in amazement, and beheld the figure of a man placed at a little distance above him on a shelving rock, with a musket in his hand that was levelled at himself. The light was not yet suffi-

ciently powerful to reach the recesses of that gloomy spot, and a second look was necessary before he discovered, to his astonishment, that it was the pedlar who stood before him. Comprehending in an instant the danger of his situation, and disdaining to implore mercy or to retreat, had the latter been possible, the youth cried firmly—

“If I am to be murdered, fire; for I will never become your prisoner.”

“No, Major Dunwoodie,” said Birch, lowering his musket, “it is neither my intention to capture nor to slay.”

“What then would you have, mysterious being?” said Dunwoodie, hardly able to persuade himself that the form he saw was not a creature of the imagination.

“Your good opinion,” answered the pedlar, with emotion; “I would wish all good men to judge me with lenity.”

“To you it must be indifferent what may be the judgment of men on your actions,” said the Major, gazing around him in continued surprise; “for you seem to be beyond the reach of their sentence.”

“ God spares the lives of his servants to his own time,” said the pedlar solemnly : “ ’Tis but a few hours and I was your prisoner, and threatened with the gallows ; now you are mine ; but, Major Dunwoodie, you are free. There are those abroad who would treat you less kindly. Of what service would that sword be to you against my weapon and a steady hand ? Take the advice of one who has never harmed you, and who never will. Do not trust yourself in the skirts of any wood, unless in company, and mounted.”

“ And have you comrades who have assisted you to escape,” said Dunwoodie, “ and who are less generous than yourself ?”

“ No, no ;” cried Harvey, clasping his hands wildly, and speaking with bitter melancholy ; “ I am alone truly ; none know me but my God and *Him*.”

“ And who ?” asked the Major, with an interest he could not control.

“ None,” continued the pedlar, recovering his composure. “ But such is not your

case, Major Dunwoodie ; you are young and happy : there are those that are dear to you, and such are not far away—danger is near them you love most—danger within and without ;—double your watchfulness—strengthen your patrols—and be silent—with your opinion of me, should I tell you more, you would suspect an ambush. But remember and guard those you love best.”

The pedlar discharged the musket in the air, and threw it at the feet of his astonished auditor ; and, when the surprise and smoke suffered Dunwoodie to look again on the rock where he had stood, the spot was vacant.

The youth was aroused from the stupor, which had been created by this strange scene, by the trampling of horses and the sound of the bugles. A patrol was drawn to the spot by the report of the musket, and the alarm had been given to the corps. Without entering into any explanation with his men, the Major returned quickly to his quarters, where he found the whole

squadron under arms, in battle array, impatiently awaiting the appearance of their leader. The officer, whose duty it was to superintend such matters, had directed a party to lower the sign of the Hotel Flanagan, and the post was already arranged for the execution of the Spy. On hearing from the major that the musket was discharged by himself, and was probably another dropped by the Skinners, (for by this time Dunwoodie had learnt the punishment inflicted by Lawton, but chose to conceal his interview with Birch,) his officers suggested the propriety of executing their prisoner before they marched. Unable to believe all he had seen was not a dream, Dunwoodie, followed by many of his officers, and preceded by Sergeant Hollister, went to the place which was supposed to contain this mysterious pedlar.

"Well, sir," said the major, sternly, to the sentinel who guarded the door, "I suppose you have your prisoner in safety."

"He is yet asleep," replied the man, "and makes such a noise I could hardly hear the bugles sound the alarm."

“Open the door, and bring him forth,” said Dunwoodie to the sergeant.

The order was obeyed, so far as circumstances would allow; but, to the utter amazement of the honest veteran, he found the room in no little disorder; the coat of the pedlar was where his body ought to have been, and part of the wardrobe of Betty was scattered in disorder on the floor. The washerwoman herself occupied the pallet in a profound mental oblivion, in all her clothes, excepting the little black bonnet, which she so constantly wore, that it was commonly thought she made it perform the double duty of both day and night cap. The noise of their entrance, and the exclamations of the party, awoke the woman, and, rising, she exclaimed hastily—

“Is it the breakfast that’s wanting? Well, faith, you look as if you would ate myself; but patience a little, darlings, and you’ll see such a fry as never was.”

“Fry!” echoed the sergeant, forgetful of his religious philosophy and the presence of his officers, “we’ll have you roasted,

you jade; you've helped that damn'd pedlar to escape."

"Jade, back again in your teeth, and damn'd pedlar too, Mister Sargeant," cried Betty, who was easily roused; "what have I to do with pedlars or escapes. I might have been a pedlar's lady, and worn my silks, if I'd had Sawny M'Twill, instead of tagging at the heels of a parcel of dragging rascallions, who don't know how to treat a lone body with decency."

"The fellow has left my Bible," said the veteran, taking the book from the floor: "in place of spending his time in reading it to prepare for his end, like a good Christian, he has been busy in labouring to escape."

"And who would stay, and be hung like a dog," cried Betty, beginning to comprehend the case: "'Tisn't every one that's born to meet with sich an ind—like yourself, Mister Hollister."

"Silence!" said Dunwoodie; "this must be inquired into closely, gentlemen; there is no outlet but the door, and there he could not pass, unless the sentinel

connived at his escape, or was asleep on his post; call up all the guard?"

As these men were not paraded, curiosity had already drawn them to the place, and they all denied that any person had passed out, excepting one, and he acknowledged that Betty had gone by him, but pleaded his orders in justification.

"You lie, you thief; you lie!" shouted Betty, who had impatiently listened to his exculpation; "would you slanderize a lone woman, by saying she walks a camp at midnight? Here have I been sleeping the long night as sweetly as the sucking babe."

"Here, sir," said the sergeant, turning respectfully to Dunwoodie, "is something written in my Bible that was not in it before; for having no family to record, I would never suffer any scribbling in the sacred book."

One of the officers read aloud—"These certify, that, if suffered to get free, it is by God's help alone, to whose divine aid I humbly recommend myself. I'm forced

to take the woman's clothes, but in her pocket is a recompense. Witness my hand—Harvey Birch.”

“What!” roared Betty, in consternation, “has the thief robbed a lone woman of her all—hang him—catch him and hang him, major, if there's law or justice in the land.”

“Examine your pocket,” said one of the youngsters, who was enjoying the scene, careless of the cause or its consequences.

“Ah! faith,” cried the washerwoman, producing a guinea; but he is a jewel of a pedlar—long life and a brisk trade to him say I—he is welcome to the duds—and if he is ever hung, many a bigger rogue will go free.”

Dunwoodie turned to leave the apartment, and saw Captain Lawton standing with folded arms, contemplating the scene in profound silence. His manner, so different from his usual impetuosity and zeal, struck his commander as singular: their eyes met, and they walked together for a few minutes in close conversation, when Dunwoodie returned and dismissed the

guard to their place of rendezvous. Sergeant Hollister, however, continued alone with Betty, who, having found none of her vestments disturbed but such as the guinea more than paid for, was in high good humour for the interview. The washerwoman had for a long time looked on the veteran with the eyes of affection, and had secretly determined within herself to remove the dangers from a lone woman, by making the sergeant the successor of her late husband. For some time the trooper had seemed to flatter her preference, and Betty, conceiving that her violence had mortified the feelings of her lover, was determined to make him all the amends in her power. Besides, rough and uncouth as she was, the washerwoman had still enough of her sex to know that the moments of reconciliation were the moments of her power. She, therefore, poured out a glass of her morning beverage, and handed it to her companion, as she observed—

“ A few warm words between friends are a trifle, you must be knowing, sergeant. It was Michael Flanagan, that I ever calumniated the most when I was loving him the best.”

“ Michael was a good soldier and a brave man,” said the warrior, finishing the glass ; “ our troop was covering the flank of his regiment when he fell, and I rode over his body myself more than once during the day : poor fellow, he lay on his back, and looked as composed as if he had died a natural death after a year’s consumption.”

“ Oh ! Michael was a great consumer, and be sartin,” said the disconsolate widow ; “ two like us make dreadful inroads in the stock, sargeant. But you’re a sober discrate man, Mr. Hollister, and would be a helpmate indeed.”

“ Why, Mrs. Flanagan,” said the veteran, with great solemnity, “ I’ve tarried to speak on a subject that lies heavy at my heart, and will now open my mind, if you’ve leisure to listen.”

“Is it listen?” cried the impatient woman; “and I’d listen to you, sergeant, if the officers never ate another mouthful; but take another drop, dear, and it will encourage you to spake freely.”

“I am already bold enough in so good a cause,” returned the veteran, rejecting her bounty; “but, Betty, do you think it was really the pedlar-spy that I placed in this room the last night?”

“And who should it be else, darling?”

“The evil-one.”

“What, the divil?”

“Ay, even Belzebub, disguised as the pedlar; and those fellows we thought to be Skinners were his imps,” said the sergeant, with a most portentous gravity in his countenance.

“Well sure, sargeant, dear,” said Betty, “you are but little out this time, any way; for if the divil’s imps go at large in the county West-Chester, sure it is the Skinners themselves.”

“No, but Mrs. Flanagan,” interrupted her companion, “I mean in their incar-

nate spirits; the evil-one knew that there was no one we would arrest sooner than the pedlar, Birch, and took on his appearance to gain admission to your room."

"And what should the divil be wanting of me?" cried Betty, tartly, "and isn't there divils enough in the corps already, without one's coming from the bottomless pit to frighten a lone body."

"'Twas, 'twas in mercy to you, Betty, that he came. You see he vanished through the door in your form, which is a symbol of your fate, unless you mend your life. Oh! I noticed how he trembled when I gave him the good book. Would any Christian, think you, my dear Betty, write in a Bible in this way; unless it might be the matter of births, and deaths, and such like chronicles?"

The washerwoman was pleased with the softness of her lover's manner, but dreadfully scandalized at his insinuation: she, however, preserved her temper, and, with the quickness of her own country's people, rejoined—

“ And would the divil have paid for the clothes, think ye. Aye! and overpaid.”

“ Doubtless, the money is base,” said the sergeant, a little staggered at such an evidence of honesty in one he thought so meanly of. “ He tempted me with his glittering coin, but the Lord gave me strength to resist.”

“ The goold looks well,” said the washerwoman. “ But I’ll change it, any way, with Captain Jack, the day: he is niver a bit afeard of any divil of them all.”

“ Betty, Betty,” said her companion, “ do not speak so disreverently of the evil-spirit; he is ever at hand, and will owe you a grudge for your language.”

“ Pooh! if he has any bowels at all, he won’t mind a fillip or two from a poor lone woman,” returned the washerwoman. “ I’m sure no other Christian would.”

“ But the dark one has no bowels, except to devour the children of men,” said the sergeant, looking around him in horror, “ and it’s best to make friends every where; for there is no telling what may happen

'till it comes. But, Betty, no man could have got out of this place, and passed all the sentinels without being known—take awful warning from the visit, therefore.”

Here the dialogue was interrupted by a summons to the sutler to prepare her morning's repast, and they were obliged to separate ; the woman secretly hoping that the interest the sergeant manifested for her was more earthly than he imagined, and the man bent on saving a soul from the fangs of the dark spirit, that was prowling through their camp in quest of victims.

During the breakfast, several expresses arrived, one of which brought intelligence of the actual force and destination of the enemy's expedition that was out on the Hudson, and another, orders to send Captain Wharton to the first post above, under the escort of a body of dragoons. These last instructions, or rather commands, for they admitted of no departure from their letter, completed the sum of Dunwoodie's uneasiness. The despair and misery of Frances were constantly before his eyes,

and fifty times he was tempted to throw himself on his horse, and gallop to the Locusts, but an uncontrollable feeling of delicacy prevented him. In obedience to the commands of his superior, an officer, with a small party, was sent to the cottage to conduct Henry Wharton to the place directed; and the gentleman, who was entrusted with the execution of the order, was charged with a letter from Dunwoodie to his friend, containing the most cheering assurances of his safety, as well as the strongest pledges of his own unceasing exertions in his favour. Lawton was left in charge of the few wounded, with part of his own troop; and as soon as the men were refreshed, the encampment broke up, and the main body marched towards the Hudson. Dunwoodie repeated, again and again, his injunctions to Captain Lawton; dwelt upon every word that had fallen from the pedlar, and canvassed, in every possible manner that his ingenuity could devise, the probable meaning of his mysterious warnings, until no excuse remained

for delaying his own departure a moment longer. Suddenly recollecting, however, that no directions had been given for the disposal of Colonel Wellmere, instead of following the rear of his column, the major yielded to his passions, and turned down the road which led to the Locusts, attended by his own man. The horse of Dunwoodie was fleet as the wind, and scarcely a minute seemed to have passed before he gained a sight, from an eminence, of the lonely vale; and, as he was plunging into the bottom lands that formed its surface, he caught a glimpse of Henry Wharton, and his escort, defiling at a distance through a pass which led to the posts above. This sight added to the speed of the anxious youth, who now turned the angle of the hill that opened to the valley, and came suddenly on the object of his search. Frances had followed the party which guarded her brother at a distance, and as they vanished from her sight, she felt as if deserted by all that she most prized in this world. The unaccountable absence of

Dunwoodie, with the shock of parting from Henry under such circumstances, had entirely subdued her fortitude, and she had sunk on a stone by the road-side, and wept as if her heart would break. Dunwoodie sprung from his charger, bidding his man to lead him up the road, and in a moment was by the side of the weeping girl.

“Frances, my own Frances!” he exclaimed, “why this distress; let not the situation of your brother create any alarm. As soon as the duty I am now on is completed, I will hasten to the feet of Washington, and beg his release. The Father of his Country will never deny such a boon to one of his favourite pupils.”

“Major Dunwoodie, for your interest on behalf of my poor brother, I thank you,” said the maid hastily, drying her eyes, and rising with dignity. “But such language, addressed to me, surely, is improper.”

“How! improper!” echoed her lover in amazement; “are you not mine—by the consent of your father—your aunt—your

brother—nay, by your own consent, my sweet Frances.”

“I wish not, Major Dunwoodie, to interfere with the prior claims that any other lady may have to your affections,” said Frances, motioning to return.

“None other, I swear, by Heaven; none other but yourself has any claim on me,” cried Dunwoodie with fervor; “you alone are mistress of my inmost soul.”

“You have practised so much, and so successfully, Major Dunwoodie, that it is no wonder you excel in deceiving the credulity of my sex,” said the maiden bitterly, attempting a smile, which the tremulousness of her muscles smothered in its birth.

“Am I a villain, Miss Wharton, that you receive me with such language—when have I ever deceived you, Frances? who has practised in this manner on your purity of heart?”

“Why has not Major Dunwoodie honoured the dwelling of his intended father with his presence lately? Did he forget it

contained one friend on a bed of sickness, and another in deep distress? Has it escaped his memory that it held his intended wife? Or is he fearful of meeting more than one that can lay a claim to that title? Oh, Peyton, Peyton, how have I been deceived in you; with the foolish credulity of my youth, I thought you all that was brave, noble, generous, and loyal."

"Frances, I see how it is that you have deceived yourself," cried Dunwoodie, his face in a glow of fire; "you do me injustice; I swear by all that is most dear to me, that you do me injustice."

"Swear not, Major Dunwoodie," interrupted the maiden, her fine countenance lighting up with all the lustre of womanly pride; "the time is gone by for me to credit oaths."

"Miss Wharton, would you have me a coxcomb," said her lover; "make me contemptible in my own eyes, to boast of what may raise me in your estimation?"

"Flatter not yourself that the task is so easy, sir," returned Frances, moving to-

wards the cottage; "we converse together, in private, for the last time; but my father would gladly welcome my mother's kinsman."

"No, Miss Wharton, I cannot enter his dwelling now: I should conduct in a manner unworthy of myself. You drive me from you, Frances, in despair. I am going on desperate service, and may not live to return. Should fortune prove severe to me, at least do my memory justice; remember that the last breathing of my soul will be for your happiness." So saying, he had already placed his foot in the stirrup; but his mistress turning on him a face that was pallid with emotion, and an eye that pierced his soul with its thrilling expression, arrested the action, and he paused.

"Peyton, Major Dunwoodie," she said, "can you ever forget the sacred cause in which you are enlisted? Your duty, both to your God and to your country, forbid your doing any thing rashly. The latter has need of your services; besides"—but

her voice became choked, and she was unable to proceed.

“Besides what?” echoed the youth, springing to her side, and offering to take her hand in his own. Frances having, however, recovered herself, coldly repulsed him, and continued her walk homeward.

“Miss Wharton, is this our parting!” cried Dunwoodie, in agony; “am I a wretch, that you treat me so cruelly? You have never loved me, and wish to conceal your own fickleness by accusations against me that you will not explain.”

Frances stopped short in her walk, and turned on her lover a look of so much purity and feeling, that, heart-stricken, Dunwoodie would have knelt at her feet for pardon; but, motioning him for silence, she once more spoke—

“Hear me, Major Dunwoodie, for the last time; it is a bitter knowledge when we first discover our own inferiority; but it is a truth that I have lately learnt. Against you I bring no charges—make no accusations—no: not willingly in my

thoughts. Were my claims to your heart just, I am not worthy of you. It is not a feeble timid girl, like me, that could make you happy. No, Peyton, you are formed for great and glorious actions, deeds of daring and renown, and should be united to a soul like your own ; one that can rise above the weakness of her sex. I should be a weight to drag you to the dust ; but, with a different spirit in your companion, you might soar to the very pinnacle of earthly glory. To such an one, therefore, I resign you freely, if not cheerfully ; and pray, oh ! how fervently, that with such an one you may be happy."

"Lovely enthusiast," cried Dunwoodie, "you know not yourself nor me. It is a woman, mild, gentle, and dependant as yourself, that my very nature loves ; deceive not yourself with visionary ideas of generosity, which will only make me miserable."

"Farewell, Major Dunwoodie," said the maid, pausing for a moment to gasp for breath ; "forget that you ever knew me ;

remember the claims of your bleeding country, and be happy."

"Happy!" repeated the youthful soldier, bitterly, as he saw her light form gliding through the gate of the lawn, and disappearing behind its shrubbery; "Oh! yes, I am now happy indeed."

Throwing himself into the saddle, he plunged his spurs into his horse, and soon overtook his squadron, which was marching slowly over the hilly roads of the county to gain the banks of the Hudson.

But painful as were the feelings of Dunwoodie at this unexpected termination to the interview with his mistress, they were but light compared to those which were experienced by the maiden herself. Frances had, with the keen eye of jealous love, easily detected the attachment of Isabella Singleton to Dunwoodie. Delicate and retiring herself as the fairest visions of romance had ever portrayed her sex, it never could present itself to the mind of Frances, that this love had been unsought. Ardent in her own affections, and artless

in their exhibition, she had early caught the eye of the youthful soldier; but it required all the manly frankness of Dunwoodie to court her favor, and the most pointed devotion to obtain his conquest. This once done, his power was durable, entire, and engrossing. But the unusual occurrences of the few preceding days, the altered mien of her lover during those events, his unwonted indifference to herself, and chiefly the romantic idolatry of Isabella, had aroused new sensations in her bosom. With a dread of her lover's integrity had been awakened the never-failing concomitant of the purest affection—a distrust of her own merits. In the moment of enthusiasm, the task of resigning her lover to another, who might be more worthy of him, seemed easy; but it is in vain that the imagination attempts to deceive the heart. Dunwoodie had no sooner disappeared, than our heroine felt all the misery of her situation; and if the youth found some relief in the cares of his command from his anxiety of mind, Fran-

ces was less fortunate in the performance of a duty imposed on her by filial piety. The removal of his son had nearly destroyed the little energy of Mr. Wharton, who required all the tenderness of his remaining children to convince him that he was able to perform the ordinary functions of life.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Flatter and praise, commend, extol their graces,
Though ne’er so black, say they have angels’ faces ;
That man who hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with that tongue he cannot win a woman.”

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

IN making the arrangement by which Captain Lawton had been left, with Sergeant Hollister and twelve men, as a guard over the wounded and heavy baggage of the corps, Dunwoodie had consulted not only the information which had been conveyed in the letter of Colonel Singleton, but the supposed bruises of his comrade’s body. It was in vain that Lawton had declared himself fit for any service that man could perform, or that he had plainly intimated that his men would never follow

Tom Mason to a charge, with the alacrity and confidence with which they followed himself; his commander was firm, and the reluctant captain was compelled to comply with as good a grace as he could assume. Before parting, Dunwoodie renewed his caution to Lawton, to keep a watchful eye on the inmates of the cottage, and especially enjoined him, if any movements of a particularly suspicious nature were noticed in the neighbourhood, to break up from his present quarters, and move down with his party, and to take possession of the domains of Mr. Wharton. A vague suspicion of danger to the family had been awakened in the breast of the major, by the language of the pedlar, although he was unable to refer it to any particular source, or understand why it was to be apprehended.

For some time after the departure of the troops, the captain was walking to and fro, before the door of the "Hotel," inwardly cursing his fate, that condemned him to an inglorious idleness, at a moment

when a meeting with the enemy might be expected, and, replying to the occasional queries of Betty, who from the interior of the building, ever and anon, demanded, in a high tone of voice, an explanation of various points in the pedlar's escape that as yet she could not comprehend. At this instant he was joined by the surgeon, who had hitherto been engaged among his patients in a distant building, and was profoundly ignorant of every thing that had occurred, even to the departure of the troops.

“Where are all the sentinels, John,” he inquired, as he gazed around with a look of curiosity; “and why are you here alone?”

“Off—all off, with Dunwoodie, to the river. You and I are left here to take care of a few sick men, and some women.”

“I am glad, however,” said the surgeon, “that Major Dunwoodie had consideration enough not to move the wounded. Here, you, Mrs. Elizabeth Flanagan, hasten with some food, that I may appease my appe-

tite. I have a dead body to dissect, and am in a hurry."

"And here you, Mister Doctor Archibald Sitgreaves," echoed Betty, showing her blooming countenance from a broken window of the kitchen, "you are ever a coming too late; here is nothing to ate but the skin of Jenny, and the body you are mintioning."

"Woman," said the surgeon, in anger, "do you take me for a cannibal, that you address your filthy discourse to me in this manner. I bid you hasten with such food as may be proper to be received into the stomach fasting."

"And I'm sure it's for a pop-gun that I should be taking you sooner than for a cannon-ball," said Betty, winking at the captain; "and I tell you that it's fasting you must be, unless you will let me cook you a steak from the skin of Jenny. The boys have eaten me up entirely."

Lawton now interferred to preserve the peace, and assured the surgeon that he had already despatched the proper persons in

quest of food for the party. A little mollified with this explanation, the operator soon forgot his hunger, and declared his intention of proceeding to business at once.

“ And where is your subject,” asked Lawton, gravely.

“ The pedlar,” said the other, gazing on the sign-post ; “ you see I made Hollister put a stage so high that the neck would not be dislocated by the fall, and I intend making as handsome a skeleton of him, as there is in the States of North-America ; the fellow has good points, and his bones are well knit. Oh ! Jack, I will make a perfect beauty of him. I have long been wanting something of the sort to send as a present to my old aunt in Virginia, who was so kind to me when a boy.”

“ The devil !” cried Lawton ; “ would you send the old woman a dead man’s bones.”

“ Why not ?” said the surgeon ; “ what nobler object is there in nature than the figure of a man ; and a skeleton may be

called his elementary parts. But what has been done with the body?"

"Off too."

"Off!" echoed the panic-stricken operator; "and who has dared to take it away without my leave."

"Sure, jist the divil," said Betty; "and who'll be after taking yourself away some of these times too, without asking your lave."

"Silence, you witch," said Lawton, with difficulty suppressing a laugh; "is this the manner in which to address an officer."

"Who called me the filthy Elizabeth Flanagan?" cried the washerwoman, snapping her fingers contemptuously. "I can remimber a frind for a year, and don't forgit an inimy for a month."

But the friendship or enmity of Mrs. Flanagan were alike indifferent to the surgeon, who could think of nothing but his loss; and Lawton was obliged to explain to his friend the apparent manner in which it happened.

“ And a lucky escape it was for you, my jewel of a doctor,” cried Betty, as the captain concluded. “ Sergeant Hollister, who saw him face to face, as it might be, says it’s Beelzeboob, and no pedlar, unless it may be in a small matter of lies and thefts, and sich wickednesses. Now a pretty figure you would have been in cutting up Beelzeboob, if the major had hung him. I don’t think it’s very asy he would have been under your knife.”

Thus doubly disappointed in both his meal and his business, Sitgreaves suddenly declared his intention of visiting the “ Locusts,” and inquiring into the state of Captain Singleton. Lawton was ready for the excursion, and, mounting, they were soon on the road, though the surgeon was obliged to submit to a few more jokes from the washerwoman before he could get out of hearing. For some time the two rode in silence ; when Lawton, perceiving that his companion’s temper was somewhat ruffled by his disappointments and Betty’s

attack, made an effort to restore the tranquillity of his feelings, by saying—

“ That was a charming song, Archibald, that you commenced, last evening, when we were interrupted by the party that brought the pedlar. The allusion to Galen was extremely neat.”

“ I knew you would like it, Jack, when your eyes were opened to its beauties,” returned the operator, suffering his muscles to relax into a smile; “ but when the brain has become confused by the fumes of wine ascending from the stomach, intoxication is liable to ensue, and the faculties by no means continue qualified to discriminate, either in matters of taste or science.”

“ And yet your ode partook largely of both,” observed Lawton, suffering no part of him to smile but his eyes.

“ Ode is by no means a proper term for the composition,” said Sitgreaves. “ I should rather term it a classical ballad.”

“ Very probably,” said the trooper; “ hearing only one verse, it was difficult to affix a name to it.”

The surgeon involuntarily hem'd, and began to clear his throat, although by no means conscious himself to what the preparation tended. But the captain, rolling his dark eye towards his companion, and observing him to be sitting with great uneasiness on his horse, continued—

“ The air is still, and the road solitary ; why not give me the remainder ; it might correct the bad taste you accuse me of possessing, to hear it.”

“ Oh ! my dear John, if I thought it would correct the errors you have imbibed, from habit and indulgence, nothing could give me more pleasure.”

“ Try ; we are fast approaching some rocks on our left ; the echo from them, I should think, must be delightful.”

Thus encouraged, and somewhat impelled by the opinion that he both sung and wrote with exquisite taste, the surgeon set about complying with the request in sober earnest. After carefully removing his spectacles from his eyes, and wiping the glasses, they were replaced with the utmost

accuracy and precision ; his wig was adjusted to his head with mathematical symmetry, and his voice being cleared by various efforts, until at length its melody pleased the exquisite sensibility of his own ear ; then, to the no small delight of the trooper, he began anew the ditty of the preceding evening. But whether it was that his steed became enlivened by the notes of his master, or that he caught a disposition to trot from Lawton's charger, the surgeon had not concluded his second verse, before his tones vibrated in regular cadence to the rise and fall of his own body on the saddle.

Notwithstanding this somewhat inharmonious interruption, Sitgreaves resolutely persevered, until he had got through with the following words—

“ Hast thou ever felt love's dart, dearest,
 Or breathed his trembling sigh ;
 Thought him, afar, was ever nearest,
 Before that sparkling eye,
 Then hast thou known, what 'tis to feel
 The pain that Galen could not heal.

Hast thou ever known shame's blush, dearest,
 Or felt its thrilling smart
 Suffuse thy cheek, like marble, clearest,
 As Damon read thy heart?
 Then, silly girl, thou'st blush'd to own
 A pain that Harvey e'en has known.

But for each pain of thine, dearest,
 Or smart of keen love's wound,
 For all that, foolish maid, thou fearest,
 An antidote is found.
 And mighty Hymen's art can heal
 Each wound that youthful lovers feel.

Hast thou ever"——

"Hush!" interrupted the trooper; "what rustling noise is that, among the rocks?"

"The echo."——

"Hast thou ever"——

"Listen," said Lawton, stopping his horse. He had not done speaking when a stone fell at his feet, and rolled harmlessly across the path.

"A friendly shot, that," cried the trooper; "neither the weapon, nor its force, implies much ill-will towards us."

"Blows from stones seldom produce more than contusions," said the operator,

bending his gaze in every direction in vain, in quest of the hand from which the missile had been hurled ; “ it must be meteoric ; there is no living being in sight, except ourselves.”

“ It would be easy to hide a regiment behind those rocks,” returned the trooper, dismounting, and taking the stone in his hand.—“ Oh ! here is the explanation, along with the mystery.” So saying, he tore a piece of paper that had been ingeniously fastened to the small fragment of rock which had thus singularly fallen before him, and opening it, the captain read the following words, written in no very legible hand.

“ A musket-bullet will go farther than a stone, and things more dangerous than yarbs for wounded men lie hid in the rocks of West-Chester. The steed may be good, but can he mount a precipice?”

“ Thou sayest the truth, strange man,” said Lawton : “ courage and activity would avail but little against assassination, and these rugged passes.” Remounting his

horse, he cried aloud, "Thanks, unknown friend; your caution will be remembered, and it shall never be forgotten that all my enemies are not merciless."

A meagre hand was extended for an instant over a rock, waving in the air, and afterwards nothing further was seen or heard by the soldiers.

"Quite an extraordinary interruption," said the astonished operator, and a letter of a very mysterious meaning."

"Oh! 'tis nothing but the wit of some bumpkin, who thinks to frighten two of the Virginians by an artifice of this kind," said the trooper, placing the billet in his pocket: "but let me tell you, Mr. Archibald Sitgreaves, you were wanting to dissect just now a damn'd honest fellow."

"It was the pedlar; one of the most notorious spies in the enemy's service," returned the other; "and I must say, that I think it an honour to such a man to be devoted to the use of science."

"He may be a spy—he must be one," said Lawton, musing; "but he has a heart

above enmity, and a soul that would honour a gallant soldier."

The surgeon turned an inquiring eye on his companion as he uttered this soliloquy, while the penetrating looks of the trooper had already discovered another pile of rocks, which, jutting forward, nearly obstructed the highway that wound directly around its base.

"What the steed cannot mount, the foot of man can overcome," exclaimed the wary partisan. Throwing himself again from his saddle, and leaping a wall of stone, he began to ascend the hill at a place which would soon have given him a bird's-eye view of the rocks in question, together with all their crevices. This movement was no sooner made, than Lawton caught a glimpse of the figure of a man stealing rapidly from his approach, and disappearing on the opposite side of the precipice.

"Spur, Sitgreaves, spur," shouted the trooper, dashing over every impediment in pursuit, "and murder the villain as he flies."

The request was promptly complied with, and a few moments brought the surgeon in full view of a man armed with a musket, who was crossing the road, and evidently seeking the protection of the thick wood on its opposite side.

“Stop, my friend, stop, until Captain Lawton comes up, if you please,” cried the surgeon, observing him to flee with a rapidity that baffled his horsemanship. But, as if the invitation contained new terrors, the footman redoubled his efforts, nor paused even to breathe, until he had reached his goal, when, turning on his heel, he discharged his musket towards the operator, and was out of sight in an instant. To gain the highway, and throw himself in his saddle, detained Lawton but a moment, and he rode to the side of his comrade just as the figure had disappeared.

“Which way has he fled?” cried the trooper.

“John,” said the surgeon, “am I not a non-combatant?”

"Whither has the rascal fled?" cried Lawton again, impatiently.

"Where you cannot follow—into that wood," returned the surgeon. "But I repeat, John, am I not a non-combatant?"

The disappointed trooper, perceiving that his enemy had escaped him, now turned his eyes, which were flashing with anger under his dark brows, upon his comrade, and gradually his muscles lost their rigid compression, his brow relaxed, and his eyes changed from their fierce expression, to the covert laughter which so often distinguished that organ in the trooper. The surgeon sat in dignified composure on his horse; his thin body erect, and head elevated with all the indignity of conscious injustice towards himself; his spectacles had been shaken down to the extreme end of the ample member on which they rested, and his eyes were glaring above them with the fullness of indignation.

A slight convulsive effort composed the muscles of the trooper's face, however, and he broke the silence again, by saying—

“Why did you suffer the rascal to escape; had you but brought him within the reach of my sabre, I would have given you a substitute for the pedlar.”

“’Twas impossible to prevent it,” said the surgeon, pointing to the bars, before which he had stopped his horse; “he threw himself on the other side of this fence, and left me where you see; nor would the man in the least attend to my remonstrances, or intimation, that you wished to hold discourse with him.”

“No!” exclaimed Lawton, in an affected surprise; “he was truly a discourteous rascal; but why did you not leap the fence, and compel him to halt? you see but three of the bars are up, and Betty Flanagan could clear them on her cow.”

The surgeon, for the first time, withdrew his eyes from the place where the fugitive had disappeared, and turned his countenance towards his comrade. His head, however, was not permitted to lower itself in the least, as he replied—

“I humbly conceive, Captain Lawton,

that neither Mrs. Elizabeth Flanagan nor her cow are examples to be emulated by Doctor Archibald Sitgreaves : it would be but a sorry compliment to science to say that a Doctor of Medicine had fractured both his legs, by injudiciously striking them against a pair of bar-posts." While speaking, the surgeon raised the limbs in question to a nearly horizontal position, that really bid defiance to any thing like a passage for himself through the defile ; but the trooper, disregarding this ocular proof of the impossibility of the movement, cried hastily—

" Here was nothing to stop you, man ; I could leap a platoon through, boot and thigh, without pricking with a single spur. Pshaw, I have often charged upon the bayonets of infantry over greater difficulties than this."

" You will please to remember, Captain John Lawton," said the surgeon, with a most imposing air of offended dignity, " that I am not the riding-master to the regiment, nor a drill-sergeant, nor a crazy

cornet ; no, sir ; and I speak it with a due respect for the commission of the continental Congress ; nor an inconsiderate captain, who regards his own life as little as that of his enemies. I am only, sir, a poor humble man of letters, a mere Doctor of Medicine, an unworthy graduate of Edinburgh, and a surgeon of dragoons ; nothing more, I do assure you, Captain John Lawton." So saying, he turned his horse's head towards the cottage, and recommenced his ride.

" Ay ! you speak the truth," muttered the dragoon ; " had I but the meanest rider in my troop with me, I should have taken the scoundrel, and given at least one victim to the offended laws of my country. But, Archibald, no man can ride well who straddles in this manner, like the Colossus of Rhodes. You should depend less on your stirrup, and keep your seat by the power of the knee."

" With proper deference to your experience, Captain Lawton," returned the surgeon, " I conceive myself to be no incompe-

tent judge of muscular action, whether in the knee or any other part of the human frame. And although but humbly educated, I am not now to learn, that the wider the base, the more firm is the superstructure."

"Yes, but damn it," cried Lawton, impatiently, "would you fill a highway in this manner with one pair of legs, when half a dozen might pass together in comfort, stretching them abroad like the scythes to the antient chariot-wheels."

The allusion to the practice of the ancients somewhat softened the indignation of the surgeon, and he replied with rather less hauteur—

"You should speak with reverence of the usages of those who have gone before us, and who, however ignorant they were in matters of science, and particularly that of surgery, yet furnished many brilliant exceptions to the superstitions of the day. Now, sir, I have no doubt that Galen has operated on wounds occasioned by these very scythes that you mention, although we can find no evidence of the fact in cotem-

porary writers. Ah! they must have given dreadful injuries, and, I doubt not, caused great uneasiness to the medical gentlemen of that day."

"There could not have been much science displayed, I think," returned the trooper, collecting himself into his usual manner; "and occasionally a body must have been left in two pieces, to puzzle the ingenuity of those gentry to unite. Yet doubtless they did it."

"What!" cried the operator, in amazement, "unite two parts of the human body that have been severed by an edged instrument, to any of the purposes of animal life?"

"That have been rent asunder by a scythe, and united to do military duty," said Lawton.

"'Tis impossible, quite impossible," cried the surgeon; "it is in vain, Captain Lawton, that human ingenuity endeavours to baffle the efforts of nature. Think, my dear sir, in this case you separate all the arteries, injure all the intestines, sever all

of the nerves and sinews, and, what is of more consequence, you"—

"Enough," said Lawton, waving his hand; "you have said enough, Dr. Sitgreaves, and I am convinced. Nothing shall ever tempt me willingly to submit to be divided in this irretrievable manner—a manner, I say, Dr. Sitgreaves, that puts at defiance all the arts of surgery."

"True, most true, my dear John," cried the surgeon, with warmth, and forgetting his displeasure; "it removes all the pleasure of a wound, when you find it beyond the reach of science to heal."

"I should think so," said Lawton, rather drily.

"What do you think is the greatest pleasure in life?" asked the operator suddenly, and with all his confidence in his companion restored.

"That may be difficult to answer."

"Not at all," cried the surgeon: "it is in witnessing, or rather feeling, the ravages of disease repaired by the lights of science co-operating with nature. I once

broke my little finger, intentionally, in order that I might reduce the fracture, and watch the cure; it was only on a small scale, you know, dear John; still I think the thrilling sensation, excited by the knitting of the bone, aided by the contemplation of the art of man thus acting in unison with nature, exceeded any other enjoyment that I have ever experienced. Oh! had it been one of the more important members, such as the leg or arm, how much greater must the pleasure have been."

"Or the neck," said the trooper. But their discourse was interrupted by their arrival at the cottage of Mr. Wharton. No one appearing to usher them into an apartment, the captain proceeded to the door of the parlour, where he knew visitors were commonly shown. On opening it, he paused for a moment, in admiration, at the scene within. The person of Colonel Wellmere first met his eye, bending forward towards the figure of the blushing Sarah, with an earnestness of manner that prevented the noise of Lawton's en-

trance being heard by either of the parties. Certain significant signs, which were embraced at a glance by the prying gaze of the trooper, at once made him a master of their secret, and he was about to retire as silently as he had advanced, when his companion, pushing himself through the passage, abruptly entered the apartment. Advancing instantly to the chair of Wellmere, the surgeon instinctively laid hold of his arm, and exclaimed—

“ Bless me—a quick and irregular pulse—flushed cheek and fiery eye—strong febrile symptoms, and such as must be attended to.” While speaking, the doctor, who was much addicted to practising in a summary way, had already produced his lancet, and made certain other indications of his intentions to proceed at once to business. But Colonel Wellmere, recovering from the confusion of the surprise, arose from his seat, rather haughtily, and said—

“ Sir, it is the warmth of the room, that lends me the colour, and I am already too much indebted to your skill to give you

any farther trouble. Miss Wharton knows that I am quite well, and I do assure you that I never felt better or happier in my life."

There was a peculiar emphasis in the latter part of this speech, that, however it might gratify the feelings of Sarah, brought the colour to her cheeks with a redoubled brilliancy; and Sitgreaves, as his eye followed the direction of those of his patient, did not fail to observe it.

"Your arm, if you please, madam," said the surgeon promptly, advancing with a bow; "anxiety and watching have done their work on your delicate frame, and there are symptoms about you that must not be neglected."

"Excuse me, sir," said Sarah, recovering herself with womanly pride, "the heat is oppressive, and I will retire, and acquaint Miss Peyton with your presence."

There was but little difficulty in practising on the abstracted simplicity of the surgeon; but it was necessary for Sarah to raise her eyes to return the salutation of

Lawton, as he bowed his head to nearly a level with the hand that held open the door for her passage. One look was sufficient; she was able to control her steps sufficiently to retire with dignity: but no sooner was she relieved from the presence of all observers, than she fell into a chair, and abandoned herself to a mingled feeling of shame and pleasure.

A little nettled at the contumacious deportment of the British colonel, Sitgreaves, after once more tendering services that were again rejected, withdrew to the chamber of young Singleton, whither Lawton had already preceded him.

CHAPTER X.

“ Oh! Henry, when thou deign'st to sue,
Can I thy suit withstand ?
When thou, lov'd youth, hast won my heart,
Can I refuse my hand ?”

Hermit of Warkworth.

THE graduate of Edinburgh found his patient rapidly improving in health, and entirely free from fever. His sister, with a cheek that was, if possible, paler than on her arrival, watched around his couch with vigilant care ; and the ladies of the cottage had not, in the midst of their sorrows and varied emotions, forgotten to discharge the duties of hospitality. Frances felt herself impelled towards their disconsolate guest, with an interest for which she could not account, and with a force that she could not control. The maid had unconsciously connected the fates of Dunwoodie and Isa-

bella in her imagination, and felt, with all the romantic ardour of a generous mind, that she was serving her former lover most, by exhibiting kindness to her he loved best. Isabella received her attentions with a kind of vacant gratitude; but neither of them indulged in any allusion to the latent source of their uneasiness. The observation of Miss Peyton seldom penetrated beyond things that were visible, and to her the situation of Henry Wharton seemed to furnish an awful excuse for the fading cheeks and tearful eyes of her niece. If Sarah manifested less of care than her sister, still the unpractised spinster was not at a loss to comprehend the reason. Love is a species of holy feeling with the virtuous of the female sex, and seems to hallow all that comes within its influence. Although Miss Peyton mourned with sincerity over the danger which threatened her nephew, still she indulged her eldest niece, with motherly kindness, in the enjoyment that chance had given her early attachment. War she well knew was a

dreadful enemy to love, and the moments that were thus granted to his votaries were not to be thrown away.

Several days now passed without any interruption to the usual vocations of the inhabitants of the cottage, or the party at the "four corners." The former were supporting their fortitude with the certainty of Henry's innocence, and a strong reliance on Dunwoodie's exertions in his behalf; and the latter, waiting with coolness the intelligence that was hourly expected of a conflict, and their orders to depart. Captain Lawton, however, waited for both these events in vain. Letters from his major announced that the enemy, finding the party which was to co-operate with them had been defeated and was withdrawn, had retired also behind the works of Fort Washington, where they continued inactive, but threatening momentarily to strike a blow in revenge for their disgrace. The trooper was enjoined to vigilance, and the letter concluded with a compliment to his honor, zeal, and undoubted bravery.

“Extremely flattering, Major Dunwoodie,” muttered the dragoon as he threw down this epistle, and stalked across the floor of his room to quiet his impatience. “A proper guard have you selected for this service. Let me see—I have to watch over the interests of a crazy irresolute old man, who does not know whether he belongs to us or to the enemy; four women, three of whom are well enough in themselves, but who are not immensely flattered by my society; and the fourth, who, good as she is, is on the wrong side of forty; some two or three blacks; a talkative house-keeper, that does nothing but chatter about gold and despisables, and signs and omens; and poor George Singleton.—Ah! well, a comrade in suffering has a claim on a man, next to his honour in the field, and an engagement with his mistress; so I’ll make the best of it.”

As he concluded this soliloquy, the trooper took a seat, and began to whistle, to convince himself how little he cared about the matter, when, by throwing his

booted leg carelessly round, he upset the canteen that held his present stock of brandy. The accident was soon repaired ; but, in replacing the wooden vessel, he observed a billet lying on the bench, on which the liquor had been placed. It was soon opened, and he read—" The moon will not rise till after midnight—a fit time for deeds of darkness." There was no mistaking the hand ; it was clearly the same that had given him the timely warning against assassination ; and the trooper continued, for a long time, musing on the nature of these two notices, and the motives that could induce the mysterious pedlar to favour an implacable enemy in the manner that he latterly had done. That he was a spy of the enemy, Lawton knew ; for the fact of his conveying intelligence to the English commander-in-chief of a party of Americans that were exposed to the enemy, was proved most clearly against him on the trial for his life. The consequences of this treason had been avoided, it is true, by a lucky order from Washington, which withdrew

the regiment a short time before the British appeared to cut it off; but still the crime was the same: perhaps, thought the partisan, he wishes to make a friend of me, against the event of another capture; but, at all events, he spared my life on one occasion, and saved it on another. I will endeavour to be as generous as himself, and pray that my duty may never interfere with my feelings. Whether the danger, intimated in the present note, threatened the cottage or his own party, the captain was uncertain, but he inclined to the latter opinion, and determined to beware how he rode abroad in the dark. To a man in a peaceable country, and in times of quiet and order, the indifference with which the partisan regarded the impending danger would be inconceivable. His contemplations on the subject were more for devising means to entrap his enemies, than to escape their machinations. But the arrival of the surgeon, who had been to pay his daily visit to the Locusts, interrupted his meditations. Sitgreaves brought an invi-

tation from the mistress of the mansion, to Captain Lawton, desiring that the cottage might be honoured with his presence at an early hour on that evening.

“What!” cried the trooper; “then they have received a letter also.”

“I think nothing more probable,” said the operator; “there is a chaplain here from the Royal Army, who has come out to exchange the British wounded, and who has an order from Colonel Singleton for their delivery. But a more mad project than to remove them now was never adopted.”

“A priest, say you—is he a hard drinker—a real camp-idler—a fellow to breed a famine in a regiment?—or does he seem a man who is in earnest in his trade?”

“A very respectable and orderly gentleman, not at all given to intemperance, judging from the outward symptoms,” returned the surgeon, “and a man who really says grace in a very regular and appropriate manner.”

“And does he stay the night?”

“Certainly, he waits for his cartel; but hasten, John, we have little time to waste. I will just step up and bleed two or three of the Englishmen, who are to move in the morning, in order to prevent inflammation, and be with you immediately.”

The gala suit of Captain Lawton was easily adjusted to his huge frame, and, his companion being ready, they once more took their route towards the cottage. Roanoke had been as much benefitted by a few days' rest as his master, and Lawton ardently wished, as he curbed his gallant steed, on passing the well-remembered rocks, that his treacherous enemy stood before him mounted and armed as himself. But no enemy, nor any disturbance whatever, interfered with their progress, and they reached the Locusts just as the sun was throwing his setting rays on the valley, and tinging the tops of the leafless trees with the colour of gold. It never required more than a single look to acquaint the trooper with the particulars of

every scene that was not uncommonly veiled ; and the first survey that he took on entering the house, told him more than the observations of a day had put into the possession of Dr. Sitgreaves. Miss Peyton accosted him with a smiling welcome that exceeded the bounds of ordinary courtesy, and evidently flowed more from feelings that were connected with the heart than from manner. Frances glided about, tearful and agitated, while Mr. Wharton stood ready to receive them, decked in a suit of velvet, that would have been conspicuous in the gayest drawing-rooms on the continent. Colonel Wellmere was in the uniform of an officer of the household troops of his prince, and Isabella Singleton sat in the parlour, clad in the habiliments of joy, but with a countenance that belied her appearance ; while her brother, by her side, looked with a cheek of flitting colour, and an eye of intense interest, like any thing but an invalid. As it was the third day that he had left his room, Dr. Sitgreaves, who began to stare about him in stupid wonder,

forgot to reprove his patient for his imprudence. Into this scene Captain Lawton moved with all the composure and gravity of a man whose nerves were not easily discomposed by novelties. His compliments were received as graciously as they were offered ; and, after exchanging a few words with the different individuals in the room, he approached to where the surgeon had withdrawn, in a kind of confused astonishment, to rally his senses to the occasion.

“ John,” whispered the surgeon, with awakened curiosity, “ what do you think ? ”

“ That your wig and my black head would look the better for a little of Betty Flanagan’s best flour ; but it is too late now, and we must fight the battle armed as you see. Why, Archibald, you and I look like militiamen flanked by those holiday Frenchmen who have come among us.”

“ Observe,” said Sitgreaves, in increasing wonder, “ here comes the army chap-

lain in his full robes as a Doctor Divinitatis—what can it mean?”

“An exchange,” said the trooper; “the wounded of Cupid are to meet and settle their accounts with the god, in the way of plighting their faith to suffer from his archery no more.”

“Oh!” ejaculated the operator, laying his finger on the side of his nose, and for the first time comprehending the case.

“Yes—oh!” muttered Lawton, in imitation; when turning suddenly to his comrade, he said fiercely, but in an undertone, “Is it not a crying shame, that a sunshine-hero, and an enemy, should thus be suffered to steal away one of the fairest plants that grows in our soil—a flower fit to be placed in the bosom of any man?”

“You speak the truth, John; and if he be not more accommodating as a husband than as a patient, I fear me that the lady will lead a troubled life.”

“Let her,” said the trooper, indignantly; “she has chosen from her country’s

enemies, and may she meet with a foreigner's virtues in her choice."

Their further conversation was interrupted by Miss Peyton, who, advancing, acquainted them that they had been invited to grace the nuptials of her eldest niece and Colonel Wellmere. The gentlemen bowed in silence at this explanation of what they already understood, and the good spinster, with an inherent love of propriety, went on to add, that the acquaintance was of an old date, and the attachment by no means a sudden thing. To this Lawton merely bowed; but the surgeon, who loved to hold converse with the virgin, replied—

"That the human mind was differently constituted in different individuals. In some, impressions are vivid and transitory; in others, more deep and lasting: indeed, there are some philosophers who pretend to trace a connexion between the physical and mental powers of the animal; but for my part, madam, I believe that the one is much influenced by habit and association,

and the other subject to the laws of science."

Miss Peyton, in her turn, bowed her silent assent to this remark, and retired with dignity, to usher the intended bride into the presence of the company. The hour had arrived when American custom has decreed, that the vows of wedlock must be exchanged; and Sarah, blushing with a variety of emotions, followed her aunt to the withdrawing-room. Wellmere sprang to receive the hand that she extended towards him with an averted face, and, for the first time, the English colonel appeared conscious of the important part that he was to act in the approaching ceremonies. Hitherto his air had been abstracted, and his manner uneasy; but every thing, excepting the certainty of his bliss, seemed to vanish at the blaze of loveliness that burst on his sight with the presence of his mistress. All arose from their seats, and the reverend gentleman had already opened the volume in his hand, when the absence of Frances was noticed: Miss Peyton

again withdrew in search of her niece, whom she found in her own apartment, and in tears.

“Come, my love, the ceremony waits but for us,” said the aunt, affectionately entwining her arm in that of her niece; “endeavour to compose yourself, that proper honour may be done to the choice of your sister.”

“Is he—can he be worthy of her?” cried Frances, in a burst of emotion, and throwing herself into the arms of the spinster.

“Can he be otherwise?” returned Miss Peyton; “is he not a gentleman? a gallant soldier, though an unfortunate one? and certainly, my love, one who appears every way qualified to make any woman happy?”

Frances had given vent to her feelings, and, with an effort, she collected sufficient resolution to venture again to join the expecting party below. But to relieve the embarrassment of this delay, the clergyman had put sundry questions to the

bridegroom ; one of which was by no means answered to his satisfaction. Wellmere was compelled to acknowledge that he was unprovided with a ring, and to perform the marriage ceremony without one, the divine pronounced to be impossible. His appeal to Mr. Wharton for the propriety of this decision, was answered affirmatively, as it would have been negatively, had the question been put in a manner to lead to such a result. The owner of the Locusts had lost the little energy he possessed, by the blow recently received through his son, and his assent to the objection of the clergyman was as easily obtained, as his consent to the premature proposals of Wellmere. In this stage of the dilemma, Miss Peyton and Frances appeared. The surgeon of dragoons approached the former, and as he handed her to a chair, observed—

“ It appears, madam, that untoward circumstances have prevented Colonel Wellmere from providing all of the decorations that custom, antiquity, and the canons of

the church, have prescribed as indispensable to enter into the honourable state of wedlock."

Miss Peyton glanced her quiet eye at the uneasy bridegroom, and perceiving him to be adorned with what she thought sufficient splendour, allowing for the time and the suddenness of the occasion, she turned her look on the speaker with a surprise that demanded an explanation.

The surgeon understood her wishes, and proceeded at once to gratify them.

"There is," he observed, "an opinion prevalent, that the heart lies on the left side of the body, and that the connexion between the members of that side and what may be called the seat of life, is more intimate than that which exists with their opposites. But this is an error that grows out of an ignorance of the scientific arrangement of the human frame. In obedience to this opinion, the fourth finger of the left hand is thought to contain a virtue that belongs to no other of its class, and is encircled, during the solemnization of wed-

lock, with a cincture or ring, as if to chain that affection to the marriage state, which is best secured by the graces of the female character." While speaking, the operator laid his hand impressively on his heart, and bowed nearly to the floor as he concluded.

"I know not, sir, that I rightly understand your meaning," said Miss Peyton, with dignity, but suffering a slight vermilion to appear on a cheek that had long lost that peculiar charm of youth.

"A ring, madam ; a ring is wanting for the ceremony."

The instant that the surgeon spoke explicitly, the awkwardness of their situation was comprehended. She glanced her eyes at her nieces, and in the younger she read a secret exultation that somewhat displeased her ; but the countenance of Sarah was suffused with a shame that the considerate aunt well understood. Not for the world would she violate any of the observances of female etiquette. It suggested itself to all the females of the Wharton fa-

mily, at the same moment, that the wedding-ring of their late mother and sister was reposing peacefully amid the rest of her jewellery, in a secret receptacle that had been provided at an early day, to secure the valuables against the predatory inroads of the marauders who roamed through the county. Into this hidden vault, the plate, and whatever was most prized, made a nightly retreat, and there the ring in question had long lain, forgotten until at this moment. But it was the business of the bridegroom, from time immemorial, to furnish this indispensable to wedlock, and on no account would Miss Peyton do any thing that transcended the usual courtesies of her sex on this solemn occasion ; certainly not until sufficient expiation for the offence had been made by a due portion of trouble and disquiet. The spinster, therefore, retained the secret from a regard to decorum, Sarah from feeling, and Frances from both, united to dissatisfaction at the connexion. It was reserved

for Dr. Sitgreaves to break the embarrassment of the party by again speaking :

“ If, madam, a plain ring, that once belonged to a sister of my own—” The operator paused a moment, and hem’d once or twice ; “ if, madam, a ring of that description might be admitted to this honour, I have one that could be easily produced from my quarters at the ‘ corners,’ and I doubt not it would fit the finger for which it is desired. There is a strong resemblance between—hem—between my late sister and Miss Wharton in stature and anatomical figure, and the proportions are apt to be observed throughout the whole animal economy.

A glance of Miss Peyton’s eye recalled Colonel Wellmere to a sense of his duty, and, springing from his chair, he assured the surgeon, that in no way could he impose heavier obligations on him, than by sending for that very ring. The operator bowed a little haughtily, and withdrew to fulfil his promise, by despatching a mes-

senger on the errand. The spinster suffered him to retire; but unwillingness to admit a stranger into the privacy of their domestic arrangements, induced her to follow, and tender the services of Cæsar instead of Sitgreaves' man, who had been offered by Isabella for this duty; her brother, probably from bodily weakness, continuing silent throughout the whole evening. Katy Haynes was accordingly directed to summon the black to the vacant parlour; and thither the spinster and surgeon repaired, to give their several instructions.

The consent to this sudden union of Sarah and Wellmere, and especially at a time when the life of a member of the family was in such imminent jeopardy, was given from a conviction, that the unsettled state of the country would probably prevent another opportunity for the lovers meeting, and a secret dread on the part of Mr. Wharton, that the death of his son might, by hastening his own, leave his remaining children

without a protector. But notwithstanding that Miss Peyton had complied with her brother's wish to profit by the accidental visit of a divine, she had not thought it necessary to blazon the intended nuptials of her niece to the neighbourhood, had even time been allowed : she thought, therefore, that she was now communicating a profound secret to Cæsar and her housekeeper.

“ Cæsar,” she commenced with a smile, “ you are now to learn, that your young mistress, Miss Sarah, is to be united to Colonel Wellmere this evening.”

“ No, no ; I tink I see 'em afore,” said Cæsar, laughing and chuckling with inward delight, as he shook his head with conscious satisfaction at his own prescience ; “ old black man tell when a young lady talk all alone wid a gem'man in a parlour.”

“ Really, Cæsar, I find I have never given you credit for half the observation that you deserve,” said the spinster gravely ; “ but as you already know on what emergency your services are re-

quired, listen to the directions of this gentleman, and take care to observe them strictly."

The black turned in quiet submission to the surgeon, who commenced as follows:—

"Cæsar, your mistress has already acquainted you with the important event about to be solemnized within this habitation; but a ring is wanted, and by riding to the mess-house at the Four Corners, and delivering this billet to either Sergeant Hollister or Mrs. Elizabeth Flanagan, it will speedily be placed in your possession. On its receipt return hither, and fail not to use diligence in both going and returning, for my patients will shortly require my presence in the hospital, and Captain Singleton already suffers from the want of rest.

By this time the surgeon had forgotten every thing but what appertained to his own duties, and rather unceremoniously left the apartment. Curiosity, or perhaps an opposite feeling, delicacy, induced

Miss Peyton to glance her eye on the open billet that Sitgreaves had delivered to the black, where she read as follows:—it was addressed to his assistant.

“ If the fever has left Kinder, give him nourishment. Take three ounces more of blood from Watson. Have a search made that the woman, Flanagan, has left none of her jugs of alcohol in the hospital;—renew the dressings of Johnson, and dismiss Smith to duty. Send the ring, which is pendent from the chain of the watch that I left with you to time the doses, by the bearer.

ARCHIBALD SITGREAVES, M.D.

Surgeon of Dragoons.

Miss Peyton yielded this singular epistle to the charge of the black in silent wonder, and withdrew, leaving Katy and Cæsar to arrange the departure of the latter.

“ Cæsar,” said Katy, with imposing solemnity, “ put the ring, when you get it,

in your left pocket, that is nearest your heart; and by no means indivour to try it on your finger, for it is unlucky."

"Try him on a finger?" interrupted the negro, stretching forth his bony knuckles; "tink a Miss Sally's ring go on old Cæsar finger?"

"'Tis not consequential whether it goes on or not," said the housekeeper; "but it is an evil omen to place a marriage-ring on the finger of another after wedlock, and of course it may be dangerous before."

"I tell you Katy," cried Cæsar, a little indignantly, "I go fetch a ring, and neber tink to put him on a finger."

"Go—go then, Cæsar," said Katy, suddenly recollecting divers important items in the supper that required her attention; "and hurry back again, and stop not for living soul."

With this injunction Cæsar departed, and was soon firmly fixed in the saddle. From his youth, the black, like all of his race, had been a hard rider; but charged with a message of such importance, he

moved at first with becoming dignity, and bending under the weight of sixty winters, his African blood had lost some of its native heat. The night was dark, and the wind whistled through the vale with the chilling dreariness of the blasts of November. By the time Cæsar reached the grave-yard that had so lately received the body of the elder Birch, all the horrors of his situation began to burst on the mind of the old man, and he threw around him many a fearful glance, in momentary expectation of seeing something superhuman. There was barely light sufficient to discern a being of earthly mould emerging into the highway, and apparently from the graves of the dead. It is in vain that philosophy and reason contend with our fears and early impressions: but Cæsar had neither to offer him their frail support. He was, however, well mounted on a coach-horse of Mr. Wharton's, and, clinging to the back of the animal with instinctive skill, he abandoned the rein to the pleasure of the beast. Hillocks,

woods, rocks, fences, and houses, flew by him with the rapidity of lightning; and the black had just began to think where and on what business it was that he was riding in this headlong manner, when he reached the place where the two roads met, and the "Hotel Flanagan" stood in all its dilapidated simplicity. The sight of a cheerful fire through its windows first gave Cæsar a pledge that he had reached the habitation of man, and with it came all his dread of the bloody Virginians;—his duty, however, must be done, and, dismounting, he fastened the foaming animal to a fence, and approached the window with cautious steps, to listen and reconnoitre.

Before a blazing fire sat Sergeant Hollister and Betty Flanagan, enjoying themselves over a liberal donation from the stores of the washerwoman.

"I tell yee, sargeant, dear," said Betty, removing the mug from her mouth, "'tis no reasonable to think it was any thing more than the pidlar himself; sure now,

where was the smell of sulphur, and the wings, and the tail, and the cloven foot? Besides, sargeant, its no dacent to tell a lone female that she had Beelzeboob for a bedfellow."

"It matters but little, Mrs. Flanagan, provided you escape his talons and fangs hereafter," returned the veteran, following his remark by a heavy potation.

Cæsar heard enough to convince him that danger to himself from this pair was but little to be apprehended. His teeth already began to chatter from cold and terror, and the sight of the comfort within stimulated him greatly to adventure to enter. He made his approaches with proper caution, and knocked with extreme humility at the door. The appearance of Hollister with a drawn sword, roughly demanding who was without, contributed in no degree to the restoration of his faculties; but fear itself lent him power to explain his errand.

"Advance," said the sergeant, with military promptness, and throwing a look of close scrutiny on the black, as he

brought him to the light ; “ advance, and deliver your despatches :—but stop, have you the countersign ?”

“ I don’t tink a know what he be,” said the black, shaking in his shoes.

“ Who ordered you on this duty did you say ?”

“ A tall massa, with a spectacle,” returned Cæsar ; “ he came a doctering a Captain Singleton.”

“ ’Twas Doctor Sitgreaves ; he never knows the countersign himself : now, blackey, had it been Captain Lawton, he would not have sent you here, close to a sentinel, without the countersign ; for you might get a pistol-bullet through your head, and that would be cruel to you ; for although you be black, I am none of them who thinks niggurs haven’t no souls.”

“ Sure a nagur has as much sowl as a white,” said Betty ; “ come hither, ould man, and warm that shivering carcass of yeers by the blaze of this fire. I’m sure a Guinea nagur loves heat as much as a souldier loves his drop.”

Cæsar obeyed in silence, and a mulatto boy, who was sleeping on a bench in the room, was bidden to convey the note of the surgeon to the building where the wounded were quartered.

“Here,” said the washerwoman, tendering to Cæsar a taste of the article that most delighted herself, “try a drop, smooty, ’twill warm the black sowl within your body, and be giving you spirits as you are going homeward.”

“I tell you, Elizabeth,” said the sergeant, “that the souls of niggurs are the same as our own: and how often have I heard the good Mr. Whitfield say, that there was no distinction of colour in heaven. Therefore it is reasonable to believe, that the soul of this here black is as white as my own, or even Major Dunwoodie’s.”

“Be sure he be,” cried Cæsar, a little tartly, who had received a wonderful stimulus by tasting the drop of Mrs. Flanagan.

“It’s a good sowl that the major is, any

way," returned the washerwoman, "and a kind sowl—aye, and a brave sowl too; and you'll say all that yeerself, sargeant, I'm thinking."

"For the matter of that," returned the veteran, "there is one above even Washington, to judge of souls; but this I will say, that Major Dunwoodie is a gentleman, who never says, go, boys; but always says, come, boys; and if a poor fellow is in want of a spur or a martingale, and the leather-wack is gone, there is never wanting the real silver to make up the loss, and that from his own pocket too."

"Why, then, are you here idle, when all that he holds most dear are in danger," cried a voice, with startling abruptness; "mount, mount, and follow your captain; arm and mount, and that instantly, or you will be too late."

This unexpected interruption produced an instantanèous confusion among the tipplers. Cæsar fled instinctively into the fire-place, where he maintained his position in defiance of a heat that would have

roasted a white man. Sergeant Hollister turned promptly on his heel, and seizing his sabre, the steel was glittering in the fire-light, in the twinkling of an eye; but perceiving the intruder to be the pedlar, who stood near the open door that led to the stoop in the rear, he began to fall back towards the position of the black, with a kind of military intuition which taught him to concentrate his forces. Betty alone stood her ground by the side of the temporary table. Replenishing the mug with a large addition of the article known to the soldiery by the name of "choke dog," she held it towards the pedlar. The eyes of the washerwoman had for some time been swimming with love and liquor, and turning them good-naturedly on Birch, she cried—

"Faith, but yee'r welcome, Mister Pidlar, or Mister Birch, or Mister Beelzeboob, or what's yee'r name. Yee'r an honest divil, any way, and I'm hoping that you found the pittlicoats convanient; come forward, dear, and fale the fire: Sergeant

Hollister won't be hurting you, for the fear of an ill turn you may be doing him hereafter; will yee, sargeant, dear?"

"Depart, ungodly man," cried the veteran, edging still nearer to Cæsar, but lifting his legs alternately as they scorched with the heat; "depart in peace. There is none here for thy service, and you seek the woman in vain. There is a tender mercy that will save her from thy talons." The sargeant ceased to utter aloud, but the motion of his lips continued, and a few scattering words of prayer were alone to be heard.

The brain of the washerwoman was in such a state of confusion, that she did not clearly comprehend the meaning of her lover; but a new idea struck her imagination, and she broke forth—

"If it's me the man seeks, where's the matter, pray; am I not a widow'd body, and my own property? And you talk of tinderness, sargeant, but it's little I see of it, any way: who knows but Mr. Beelze-

boob here is free to spake his mind ; I'm sure it is willing to hear, that I am."

"Woman," said the pedlar, "be silent; and you, foolish man, mount; arm and mount, and flee to the rescue of your officer, if you are worthy of the cause in which you serve, and would not disgrace the coat that you wear." The feelings of the pedlar communicated to his manner the power of eloquence, and he vanished from the sight of the bewildered trio, with a rapidity that left them uncertain whither he had fled.

On hearing the voice of an old friend, Cæsar emerged from his quarters, with a skin that was glistening with moisture, and fearlessly advanced to where Betty stood in a maze of intellectual confusion.

"I wish a Harvey stop," said the black; "if he ride down a road, I should like to go along; I don't tink Johnny Birch hurt his own son."

"Poor ignorant wretch!" exclaimed the veteran, recovering his voice, with a long-

drawn breath; "think you that figure was of flesh and blood?"

"Harvey an't a berry fleshy," replied the black, "but he berry clebber man."

"Pooh! sargeant, dear," exclaimed the washerwoman, "talk rason for once, and mind what the knowing one tells yee; call out the boys, and ride a bit after Captain Jack,—rimimber, darling, that he told you the day, to be in readiness to mount at a moment's warning."

"Ay, but not at a summons from the foul fiend. Let but Captain Lawton, or Lieutenant Mason, or Cornet Skipwith, say the word," cried the veteran, "and who is quicker in the saddle than I am?"

"Well, sargeant, how often is it that yee've boasted to myself, that the corps wasn't a bit afeard to face the divil."

"No more be we, in battle array, and by day-light; but it's fool-hardy and irreverent to tempt Satan, and on such a night as this; listen how the wind whistles through the trees, and hark! there is the howlings of evil spirits abroad."

"I see him," said Cæsar, opening his eyes to a width that might have embraced more than an ideal form.

"Where?" interrupted the sergeant, again instinctively laying his hand on the hilt of his sabre.

"No, no," said the black; "I see a Johnny Birch come out of he grave—Johnny walk afore he bury'd."

"Ah! then he must have led an evil life indeed," said Hollister; "the blessed in spirit lie quiet until the general muster at the last day, but wickedness disturbs the soul in this life as well as in that which is to come."

"And what is to come of Captain Jack?" cried Betty, angrily; "is it yee'r orders that yee won't mind, nor a warning given? I'll jist git my cart, and ride down and tell him that you are afeard of a dead man and Beelzeboob; and it isn't succour he may be expicting from you!—I wonder who'll be the orderly of the troop the morrow then?—his name won't be Hollister, any way."

“Nay, Betty, nay,” said the sergeant, laying his hand on her shoulder; “if there must be riding to-night, let it be by him whose duty it is to call out the men, and set an example. The Lord have mercy, and send us enemies of flesh and blood.”

Another glass confirmed the veteran in a resolution that was only excited by a dread of his captain's displeasure, and he proceeded to summon the dozen men who had been left under his command. The boy arriving with the ring, Cæsar placed it carefully in the pocket of his waistcoat next his heart, and, mounting, shut his eyes, seized his charger by the mane, and continued in a state of comparative insensibility, until the animal stopped at the door of the warm stable, whence he had started.

The movements of the dragoons, being timed to the order of a march, were much slower, and were made with a watchfulness that was intended to guard against surprise from the evil one himself.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Be not your tongue thy own shame’s orator;
Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty;
Apparel vice like virtue’s harbinger.”

Comedy of Errors.

THE situation of the party in Mr. Wharton’s dwelling was sufficiently awkward during the short hour of Cæsar’s absence; for such was the astonishing rapidity displayed by his courser, that the four miles of road was gone over, and the events we have recorded had occurred, somewhat within that period of time. Of course the gentlemen strove to make the irksome moments fly as swiftly as possible; but premeditated happiness is certainly of the least joyous kind. The bride and bridegroom, from a variety of reasons, are privileged to be dull, and but few of their friends seemed disposed, on the present

occasion, to dishonour their example. The English colonel exhibited a proper portion of uneasiness at this unexpected interruption to his felicity, and sat with a varying countenance by the side of Sarah, who seemed to be profiting by the delay, to gather fortitude for the solemn ceremony. In the midst of this embarrassing silence, Dr. Sitgreaves addressed himself to Miss Peyton, by whose side he had contrived to procure a chair.

“Marriage, madam, is pronounced to be honourable in the sight of God and man; and it may be said to be reduced in the present age to the laws of nature and reason. The ancients, in sanctioning polygamy, lost sight of the provisions of nature, and condemned thousands to misery: but with the increase of science have grown the wise ordinances of society, which ordain that man should be the husband of but one woman.”

Wellmere glanced a fierce expression of disgust at the surgeon, that indicated his sense of the tediousness of the other's re-

marks: while the spinster, with a slight trembling at touching on forbidden subjects, replied, with an extremely dignified inclination of her body—

“I had thought, sir, that we were indebted to the Christian religion for our morals on this subject.”

“True, madam,” replied the operator; “it is somewhere provided in the prescriptions of the apostles, that the sexes should henceforth be on an equality in this respect. But in what degree could polygamy affect holiness of life? Certainly it was a scientific arrangement of Paul, who was much of a scholar, and probably had frequent conferences with Luke, whom we all know to have been bred to the practice of medicine, on this important subject.”

To this profound discussion the spinster made no other reply, than another bend of her body, that would have struck an observant man dumb; but Captain Lawton, placing the point of his sheathed sabre on the floor, folded his hands across the hilt, and, leaning his chin thereon, threw

singular glances with his searching eyes alternately from the surgeon to the bridegroom.

“Yet this practice still prevails,” said the trooper; “and in those very countries where it was first abolished by the Christian code. Pray, Colonel Wellmere, in what manner is bigamy punished in England?”

Thus addressed, the bridegroom raised his eyes to the countenance of the other; but they quickly sunk again under the prying look they encountered; and an effort banished the tremor from his lip, and restored some of the colour to his cheek, as he replied—

“Death! as such an offence merits.”

“Death and dissection,” continued the operator; “it is seldom that the law loses sight of eventual utility in a malefactor. Bigamy in a man is certainly a most heinous offence.”

“More so, think you, than celibacy?” asked Lawton, a little archly.

“Even so,” returned the surgeon, with

undisturbed simplicity ; “ he who remains in a single state may devote his life to science and the extension of knowledge, if not of his species ; but the wretch who profits by the constitutional tendency of the female sex to credulity and tenderness, incurs all the wickedness of a positive sin, heightened by the baseness of deception in its execution.”

“ Really, sir, the ladies are infinitely obliged to you, for attributing folly to them as part of their nature.”

“ Captain Lawton, in man the animal is more nobly formed than in woman. The nerves are endowed with less sensibility ; the whole frame is less pliable and yielding ; is it, therefore, surprising, that a tendency to rely on the faith of her partner is more natural to woman than to the other sex ?”

Wellmere, unable at this moment to listen with any degree of patience to the dialogue, sprung from his seat, and paced the floor in disorder. Pitying his situation, the reverend gentleman, who, in his robes,

was patiently awaiting the return of Cæsar, changed the discourse, and a few minutes brought the black himself. The billet was handed to Dr. Sitgreaves; for Miss Peyton had expressly enjoined Cæsar, not to implicate her in any manner in the errand on which he was despatched. The note contained a summary statement of the several subjects of the surgeon's directions, and referred him to the black for the ring; it was instantly demanded, and promptly delivered. A transient look of melancholy clouded the brow of the operator as he stood a moment, and gazed silently on the bauble; nor did he remember the place or the occasion, while he soliloquized as follows:

“ Poor Anna ! gay as innocence and youth could make you was thy heart when this cincture was formed to grace thy nuptials ; but, ere the hour had come, God had taken you to himself. Years have passed, my sister, but never have I forgotten the companion of my infancy.” He advanced to Sarah, and, unconscious of observation,

placing the ring on her finger, continued, " She, for whom it was intended, has long been in her grave, and the youth who bestowed the gift soon followed her sainted spirit ; take it, madam, and God grant that it may be an instrument in making you as happy as you deserve to be."

Sarah felt an unaccountable chill at her heart, as this burst of feeling escaped from the surgeon ; but Wellmere offering his hand, she was led before the divine, and the ceremony began. The first words of this imposing office produced a dead stillness in the apartment ; and the minister of God proceeded to the solemn exhortation, and witnessed the plighted troth of the parties, when the investiture of the ring was to follow. It had been left, from inadvertency and the agitation of the moment, where Sitgreaves had placed it ; a slight interruption was occasioned by the circumstance, and the clergyman was about to proceed, when a figure glided into the midst of the party, that at once put a stop to the ceremony.—It was the pedlar. His

sunken and cowering eye no longer avoided the look of others, but glared wildly around him, and his whole frame was agitated by an exertion that had shaken his iron nerves. But all these emotions passed away like shadows from a fleeting cloud, and, assuming a look of deep humility and habitual respect, he turned to the bridegroom, and bowing low, said—

“Can Colonel Wellmere waste the precious moments here, when his wife has crossed the ocean to meet him? The nights are long, and the moon bright; a few hours riding would take him to the city.”

Aghast at the suddenness of this extraordinary address, Wellmere for a moment lost the command of his faculties. To Sarah, the countenance of Birch, wild and agitated as it was, produced no terror; but the instant she recovered from the surprise of his interruption, she turned her anxious gaze on the features of the man to whom she had just pledged herself for life. They afforded the most terrible confirmation of all that the pedlar affirmed; the room

whirled around with her, and she fell lifeless into the arms of her aunt. There is an instinctive delicacy in woman, that for a time seems to conquer all other emotions, however powerful, and, through its impulse, the insensible bride was immediately conveyed from sight by her friends, and the parlour was deserted to the wandering group of men.

The confusion of the fall of Sarah enabled the pedlar to retreat with a rapidity that would have baffled pursuit, had any been attempted, and Wellmere stood with all eyes fixed on him in ominous silence.

“ ’Tis false—’tis false as hell !” he cried, striking his hand to his forehead. “ I have ever denied her claim ; nor will the laws of my country compel me to acknowledge it.”

“ But will not conscience, and the laws of God ?” asked Lawton.

Before Wellmere could reply, Singleton, who had hitherto been supported by his servant, moved into the centre of the circle, and, with cheeks glowing with animation, and eyes that flashed fire, exclaimed—

“Thus is it ever with your nation, proud Englishman ; your boasted honour, where is it ? obligatory only among yourselves ; but have a care,” striking the hilt of his sabre ; “each daughter of America has a claim upon the protection of her sons, and there are none so helpless, but a countryman can be found to avenge her injuries, or redress her wrongs.”

“ ’Tis well, sir,” said Wellmere, haughtily, and retreating towards the door ; “your situation protects you now : but a time may come—”

He had reached the entry, when a slight tap on his shoulder caused him to turn his head ; it was Captain Lawton, who, with a smile of peculiar meaning, beckoned to him to follow. The state of Wellmere’s mind was such, that he would gladly have gone any where to avoid the gaze of horror and detestation that glared from every eye he met. They reached the stables before the trooper spoke, when he cried aloud—

“Bring out Roanoke.”

His man appeared with the steed capari-

soned as when ready for its master ; and Lawton, coolly throwing the bridle on the neck of the animal, took his pistols from the holsters, and continued, “ You said truly, Colonel Wellmere, when you pronounced George Singleton unfit for combat; but here are weapons that have seen good service before to-day ; ay ! and in honourable hands, sir. These were the pistols of my father, Colonel Wellmere ; he used them with credit in the wars with France, and gave them to me to fight the battles of my country with. In what better way can I serve her than in exterminating a wretch who would have blasted one of her fairest flowers ?”

“ This injurious treatment shall meet with its reward,” cried the Englishman, seizing the offered weapon eagerly, “ and the blood lie on the head of him who sought it.”

“ Amen !” said Lawton ; “ but hold, a moment, sir. You are now free, and the passports of Washington are in your pocket ; I give you the fire ;—if I fall, there is a

stead that will outstrip pursuit ; and I would advise you to retreat without much delay ; for even Archibald Sitgreaves would fight in such a cause ; nor will the guard above be very apt to give quarters."

"Are you ready?" asked Wellmere, gnashing his teeth with rage.

"Stand forward, Tom, with the lights ; —fire!"

Wellmere fired, and the bullion flew from the epaulette of the trooper in fifty pieces.

"Now then the turn is mine," said Lawton deliberately, and levelling his pistol.

"And mine!" shouted a voice, as the weapon was struck from his hand: "can you find nothing to do but to shoot at a man, as if he was a turkey at a Christmas match? By all the devils in hell, 'tis the mad Virginian; fall on, my boys, and take him; this is a prize not hoped for."

Unarmed and surprised as he was, Lawton's presence of mind did not desert him: he felt he was in the hands of those from whom he was to expect no mercy; and, as

four of the skimmers fell upon him at once, he used his gigantic strength to the utmost. Three of the band grasped him by the neck and arms, with an intent to clog his efforts, and pinion him with ropes. The first of these he threw from him with a violence, that sent him against the building, where he lay for a moment stunned with the blow. But the fourth seized his legs, and, unable to contend with such odds, the trooper came to the earth, bringing with him both of his assailants. The struggle on the ground was short, but terrific; curses, and the most dreadful imprecations, were uttered by the skimmers, who in vain called on three more of their band, that were gazing on the combat in nerveless horror, to assist in securing their prize. A difficulty of breathing, from one of the combatants, was heard, accompanied by the stifled moanings of a strangled man; and directly one of the group arose on his feet, shaking himself from the wild grasp of the others. Both Wellmere and the servant of Lawton had fled; the former

to the stables, and the latter to give the alarm, and all was darkness. The figure that stood erect sprung into the saddle of the unheeded charger ; sparks of fire from the armed feet of the horse gave light enough to discover the trooper dashing like the wind towards the highway.

“ By hell, he’s off ! ” cried the leader, hoarse from rage and exhaustion ; “ fire ! — bring him down — fire, I say, or you’ll be too late.”

The order was obeyed, and one moment of awful suspense followed, in the vain hope of hearing the huge frame of Lawton tumbling from his steed.

“ He’d never fall, if you had killed him,” muttered one ; “ I’ve known them Virginians sit their horses with two and three balls through them ; ay, even after they were dead.”

A freshening of the blast wafted the tread of a horse down the valley, which, by its speed, gave assurance of a rider governing its motion.

“ Them trained horses always stop

when the rider falls," observed one of the gang.

"Then," cried the leader, striking his musket on the ground in a rage, "the fellow is safe!—to your business at once. A short half hour will bring down that canting sergeant and the guard upon us. 'Tis lucky if the guns don't turn them out. Quick, to your posts, and fire the house in the chambers; smoking ruins are good to cover evil deeds."

"What is to be done with this lump of earth?" cried another, pushing the body that yet lay insensible, where the grasp of Lawton had deprived it of animation; "a little rubbing would bring him too."

"Let him lie," said the leader fiercely; "had he been half a man, that dragooning rascal would have been in my power;—enter the house, I say, and fire the chambers—we can't go amiss here;—there is plate and money enough to make you all gentlemen; yes, and revenge too."

The idea of silver in any way was not to be resisted; and, leaving their companion,

who began to show faint signs of life, they rushed tumultuously towards the dwelling. Wellmere availed himself of the opportunity, and stealing from the stable with his own charger, was able to gain the highway unnoticed. For an instant he hesitated, whether to ride towards the point where he knew a guard was stationed, and endeavour to rescue the family, or, profiting by his liberty, and the exchange that had been effected by the divine, to seek the royal army. Shame, and the consciousness of guilt, determined him to take the latter course; and he rode towards New-York, stung with the reflection of his own baseness, and harassed with the apprehension of meeting with an enraged woman, that he had married during his late visit to England, but whose claims, so soon as his passion was sated, he had resolved never willingly to admit. In the tumult and agitation of the moment, the retreat of Lawton and Wellmere was but little noticed; the condition of Mr. Wharton, and the exhaustion that succeeded the

excitement of George Singleton, demanding the care and consolation of both the surgeon and the divine. The report of the fire-arms first roused the family to the sense of a new danger, and but a minute elapsed before the leader and one more of the gang entered the room.

“Surrender, you servants of King George,” shouted the leader, presenting his musket to the breast of Sitgreaves, “or I will let a little of your tory blood from your veins.”

“Gently, gently, my friend,” said the surgeon; “you are doubtless more expert in inflicting wounds than in healing them; the weapon that you hold so indiscreetly is extremely dangerous to animal life.”

“Yield, then, or take its contents,” exclaimed the other.

“Why, and wherefore should I yield? I am a practitioner of medicine, and a non-combatant. The articles of capitulation must be arranged with Captain John Lawton; though yielding I believe is not

a subject on which you will find him particularly complying."

The fellow had by this time taken such a survey of the group, as convinced him that little danger was to be apprehended from resistance; and, eager to seize his share of the plunder, he dropped his musket, and was soon busy in arranging divers articles of plate in bags, with the assistance of one of his men, so that it would be in the most convenient situation to accompany them in their retreat. The cottage now presented a most singular spectacle; the ladies were gathered around Sarah, who yet continued insensible in one of the rooms that had escaped the notice of the marauders. Mr. Wharton sat in a state of perfect imbecility, listening to, but not profiting by, the words of comfort that fell from the lips of the clergyman, who soon became too much terrified with the scene to offer them. Singleton was lying on a sofa, shaking with debility, and inattentive to surrounding objects; while the surgeon was administering restoratives,

and looking at the dressings, with a coolness that mocked the tumult. Cæsar, and the attendants of Captain Singleton, had retreated to the wood, in the rear of the cottage; and Katy Haynes was flying about the building, busily employed in forming a bundle of valuables, from which, with the most scrupulous honesty, she rejected every article that was not really and truly her own.

But to return to the party at the Four Corners. When the veteran had got his men mounted and under arms, a restless desire to participate in the glory and dangers of the expedition came over the washerwoman. Whether she was impelled to the undertaking by a dread of remaining alone, or a wish to hasten in person to the relief of her favourite, we will not venture to assert; but, as Hollister was unwillingly giving the orders to wheel and march, the voice of Betty was heard exclaiming—

“ Stop a bit, sargeant dear, till two of the boys git out the cart, and I’ll jist ride

wid yee ; 'tis like there'll be wounded, and it will be mighty convanient to bring them home in."

Although inwardly much pleased with any cause of delay to a service that he so little relished, Hollister affected some displeasure at the detention, and replied—

" Nothing but a cannon-ball can take one of my lads from his charger ; and it's not very likely that we shall have as fair fighting as cannon and musketry, in a business of the evil one's inventing ; so, Elizabeth, you may go if you will ; but the cart will not be wanting."

" Now, sargeant, dear, you lie any way," said Betty, who was somewhat unduly governed by her potations ; " and wasn't Captain Singleton shot off his horse but tin days gone by ?—ay, and Captain Jack himself too ; and didn't he lie on the ground face uppermost and back downwards, looking grim ? and didn't the boys tink him dead, and turn and lave the rig'lars the day ?"

“ You lie back again,” cried the sergeant, fiercely, “ and so does any one, who says that we didn’t gain the day.”

“ For a bit or so—only I mane for a bit or so,” said the washerwoman ; “ but Major Dunwoodie turn’d you, and so you lick’d the rig’lars. But the captain it was that fell, and I’m thinking that there’s no better rider going ; so, sargeant, it’s the cart that will be convanient. Here, two of you, jist hitch the mare to the tills, and it’s no whiskey that you’ll be wanting the morrow ; and put the piece of Jinny’s hide under the pad ; the baste is never the better for the rough ways of the county West-Chester.” The consent of the sergeant being obtained, the equipage of Mrs. Flanagan was soon in readiness to receive its burthen.

“ As it is quite uncertain whether we shall be attacked in front or rear,” said Hollister, “ five of you shall march in advance, and the remainder shall cover our retreat towards the barrack, should we be pressed. ’Tis an awful moment to a man

of little learning, Elizabeth, to command in such a service; for my part, I wish devoutly that one of the officers was here; but my trust is in the Lord."

"Pooh! man, away wid yee," said the washerwoman, who had got herself comfortably seated; "the divil a bit of an inimy is there near; march on, hurry-skurry, and lit the mare trot, or it's but little that Captain Jack will thank yee for the help."

"Although unlearned in matters of communicating with spirits, or laying the dead, Mrs. Flanagan," said the veteran, "I have not served through the old war, and five years in this, not to know how to guard the baggage. Doesn't Washington always cover the baggage? I am not to be told my duty by a camp-follower. Fall in as you are ordered, and dress."

"Well, march, any way," cried the impatient washerwoman; "the black is there already, and it's tardy the captain will think yee."

“ Are you sure that it was a real black man that brought the order?” said the sergeant, dropping in between the platoons, where he could converse with Betty, and was equally at hand to lead either way.

“ Nay,” said the washerwoman, “ and I’m sure of nothing, dear. But why don’t the boys prick their horses, and jog a trot; the mare is mighty uneasy, and it’s no warm in this cursed valley, riding as much like a funeral party as old rags is to continental.”

“ Fairly and softly, aye, and prudently, Mrs. Flanagan,” said the veteran; “ it’s not rashness that makes the good officer. If it is a spirit that we have to encounter, it’s more than likely that he’ll make his attack by surprise:—horse are not very powerful in the dark, and I have a character to lose, good woman.”

“ Caractur !” echoed Betty, “ and isn’t it caractur, and life too, that Captain Jack has to lose ?”

"Halt!" cried the sergeant; "what is that lurking near the foot of the rock, on the left?"

"Sure, it's nothing," said the uneasy washerwoman; "unless it be the matter of Captain Jack's sowl that's come to haunt yee, for not being brisker on the march."

"Betty, 'tis foolishness to talk in such a way. Advance one of you, and reconnoitre the spot—draw swords!—rear rank close to the front!"

"Pshaw!" shouted Betty, "is it a big fool or a big coward that yee are? jist wheel from the road, boys, and I'll shove the mare down upon it in the twinkling of an eye; and it's no ghost that I fear."

By this time one of the men had returned, and declared there was nothing to prevent their advancing, and the party continued their march, but with great deliberation and caution.

"Courage and prudence are the jewels of a soldier, Mrs. Flanagan," said the ser-

geant; "and without one the other may be said to be good for nothing."

"Prudence without courage," cried the other; "is it *that* you mane? and it's so that I am thinking myself, sargeant. This baste pulls tight on the reins, any way."

"Be patient, good woman—hark! what is that?" said Hollister, pricking up his ears at the report of Wellmere's pistol; "I'll swear 'tis a pistol, and one from our regiment. Hark! rear rank close to the front! Mrs. Flanagan, I must leave you." So saying, having recovered all his faculties, by hearing a martial sound that he understood, he placed himself at the head of his men with an air of military pride, that the darkness prevented the washer-woman from beholding. A volley of musketry now rattled in the night wind, and the sergeant exclaimed—

"March! quick time!"

The next instant the trampling of a horse was heard coming up the road, at a rate that announced a matter of life or death; and Hollister again halted his

party, and rode a short distance in front himself to meet the rider.

“Stand! Who goes there?” shouted Hollister, in the full tones of manly resolution.

“Ha! Hollister, is it you?” cried Lawton; “ever ready, and at your post; but where is the guard?”

“At hand, sir, and ready to follow you through thick and thin,” said the veteran, relieved at once from his responsibility, and now eager to be led against his enemy.

“’Tis well,” said the trooper, riding up to his men; and, speaking a few words of encouragement, he led them down the valley at a rate but little less rapid than his approach. The miserable horse of the sutler was soon distanced, and Betty, thus thrown out in the chace, turned to the side of the road, and observed—

“There; it’s no difficult to tell that Captain Jack is wid’em, any way; and it’s the funeral that’s soon over now; and away they go like so many nagur boys to

a husking-frolick. Well, I'll jist hitch the mare to this bit of a fence, and walk down and see the sport, afoot ; it's no rasonable to expose the baste to be hurted."

Led on by Lawton, the men followed, destitute alike of fear and reflection. Whether it was a party of the refugees, or a detachment from the royal army, that they were to assail, they were profoundly ignorant ; but they knew that the officer in advance was distinguished for courage and personal prowess, and these are virtues that are sure to captivate the thoughtless soldiery. On arriving near the gate of the Locusts, the trooper halted his party, and made his arrangements for the assault. Dismounting, he ordered eight of his men to follow his example, and, turning to Hollister, said—

" Stand you here, and guard the horses ; but, if any thing attempts to pass, stop it or cut it down, and—" The flames at this moment burst through the dormant windows and cedar-roof of the cottage, and a bright light glared on the darkness of

the night. "On!" shouted the trooper; "on! give quarters when you have done justice."

There was a startling fierceness in the voice of the trooper, that reached to the heart, even amid the horrors of the cottage. The leader of the Skinners dropped his plunder, and for a moment stood in nerveless dread; then, rushing to a window, he threw up the sash. At this instant Lawton entered, sabre in hand, into the apartment.

"Die, miscreant!" cried the trooper, cleaving the other marauder to the jaw; but the leader sprang into the lawn, and escaped his vengeance. The shrieks of the appalled females restored Lawton to his presence of mind, and the earnest entreaty of the divine induced him to attend to the safety of the family. One more of the gang fell in with the dragoons, and met with a similar fate; but the remainder had taken the alarm in season to escape. Occupied with Sarah, neither Miss Singleton

nor the ladies of the house discovered the entrance of the Skinners, until the flames were raging around them with a fury that threatened the building with instant destruction. The shrieks of Katy, and of the terrified consort of Cæsar, together with the noise and uproar in the adjacent apartment, first roused Miss Peyton and Isabella to a sense of their danger.

“Merciful Providence!” exclaimed the alarmed spinster; “there is a dreadful confusion in the house, and there will be bloodshed in consequence of this affair.”

“There are none to fight,” returned Isabella, with a face paler than the other; “Dr. Sitgreaves is very peaceable in his disposition, and surely Captain Lawton would not forget himself so far.”

“The southern temper is quick and fiery,” continued Miss Peyton; “and your brother, feeble and weak as he is, has looked the whole afternoon flushed and angry.”

“Good Heaven!” cried Isabella, with difficulty supporting herself on the couch

of Sarah ; " he is gentle as the lamb by nature ; but the lion is not his equal when roused."

" We must interfere," said the spinster ; " our presence will quell the tumult, and possibly save the life of a fellow-creature."

Miss Peyton was excited to do that which she conceived was a duty worthy of her sex and nature, and advanced with all the dignity of injured female feeling to the door, followed by Isabella, whose energy had returned, and whose eye, by its sparkling brilliancy, announced a soul equal to its task. The apartment, to which Sarah had been conveyed, was in one of the wings of the building, and communicated with the principal hall of the cottage by a long and usually dark passage. This was now light, and across its termination several figures were noticed, rushing with an impetuosity that prevented an examination of their employment.

" Let us advance," said the spinster, with a firmness that her face belied : " they surely must respect our sex."

“ They shall,” cried Isabella, taking the lead in the enterprise ; and Frances was left alone with her sister. A few minutes were passed in silence by the maid, as she stood earnestly gazing on the pale countenance of Sarah, watching her reviving looks with an anxiety that prevented her observing the absence of her friends, when a loud crash in the upper apartments was succeeded by a bright light that glared through the open door, and made objects as distinct to the eye as if they were placed under a noon-day sun. Sarah raised herself on her bed, and, staring wildly around, pressed both her hands on her forehead, as if endeavouring to recollect events, and then, smiling vacantly on her sister, said—

“ This, then, is heaven, and you are one of its bright spirits. Oh ! how glorious is its radiance ! I had thought the happiness I have lately experienced was too much for earth. But we shall meet again—yes—yes—we will meet again.”

“ Sarah ! Sarah !” cried Frances, in terror ; “ my sister—my only sister—Oh ! do

not smile so horridly! know me, or you will break my heart."

"Hush," said Sarah, raising her hand for silence; "you may disturb his rest; surely he will follow me to the grave. Think you there can be two wives in the grave? No—no—no—one—one—one—only one."

Frances dropped her head into the lap of her sister, and wept in agony.

"Do you shed tears, sweet angel," continued Sarah soothingly: "then heaven is not exempt from grief. But where is Henry? He was executed, and he must be here too; but perhaps they will come together. Oh, how joyful will be the meeting!"

Frances sprang on her feet, and paced the apartment in a bitterness of sorrow that she could not control. The eye of Sarah followed her in childish admiration of her beauty and her attire, which had been adapted to the occasion, and then, pressing her hand across her forehead, once more said—

"You look like my sister; but all good and lovely spirits are alike. Tell me, were

you ever married? Did you ever let another, and a stranger, steal your affections from your father, and brother, and sister, as I have done? If not, poor wretch, I pity you, although you may be in heaven."

"Sarah—peace, peace; I implore you to be silent," shrieked Frances, again rushing to her bed, "or you will kill me at your feet."

Another dreadful crash was heard, that shook the building to its centre. It was the falling of the roof, and the flames threw their light abroad so as to make objects visible around the cottage through the windows of the room. Frances flew to one of them, and saw the confused group that was collected on the lawn. Among them were her aunt and Isabella, pointing to the fiery edifice with distraction, and apparently urging the dragoons, who were near them, to enter it. It was the first time the maid comprehended their danger, and, uttering a wild shriek, she flew through the passage instinctively, without consideration or object.

A dense and suffocating column of smoke opposed her progress. She paused to breathe, when a man caught her in his arms, and bore her in a state of insensibility, through the falling embers and darkness, to the open air. The instant that Frances recovered her recollection, she perceived that it was to Lawton she owed her life, and, throwing herself on her knees before him, she cried—

“Sarah, Sarah, Sarah! Save my sister, and may the blessing of God await you.”

Her strength failed her, and she sunk on the grass in insensibility. The trooper pointed to her figure, and motioned to Katy for assistance, and then advanced once more near to the cottage. The fire had already communicated to the wood-work of the piazzas and windows, and the whole exterior of the cottage was covered with smoke. The only entrance was through these dangers; and even the hardy and impetuous Lawton paused to consider. It was for a moment only, and he dashed into the heat and darkness, where, missing

the entrance, he wandered for a minute, and precipitated himself back again into the lawn. Drawing a single breath of pure air, he renewed the effort, and was again unsuccessful; but, on a third trial, he met a man staggering under the load of a human body. It was neither the place, nor was there time, to question or to make distinctions, and the trooper caught both together in his arms, and, with gigantic strength, bore them through the smoke. To his astonishment, he perceived that it was the surgeon, and the body of one of the Skinners that he had saved.

“Archibald!” he exclaimed, “why, in the name of justice, did you bring this dead miscreant to light again? His deeds are rank to heaven!”

The operator was too much bewildered to reply instantly; but, wiping the moisture from his forehead, and clearing his lungs from the vapour that he had inhaled, he said, piteously—

“Ah! it is all over. Had I been in time to have stopped the effusion from the jugu-

lar, he might have been saved; but the heat was conducive to hemorrhage; yes, life is extinct indeed. Well, are there any more wounded?"

His question was put to the air; for Frances was removed to the opposite side of the building, where her friends were collected, and Lawton once more had disappeared in the smoke.

By this time the flames had dispersed much of the suffocating vapor, so that the trooper was able to find the door; and in its very entrance he was met by a man supporting the insensible Sarah in his arms. There was but barely time to reach the lawn again before the fire broke through all the windows, and wrapped the whole building in a single sheet of flame.

"God be praised," ejaculated the preserver of Sarah: "It would have been an awful death to have died."

The trooper turned from gazing at the edifice, to the speaker, and, to his astonishment, instead of one of his own men, beheld the pedlar.

“Ha! the Spy,” he exclaimed. “By heavens! you cross me like a spectre.”

“Captain Lawton,” said Birch, leaning in momentary exhaustion against the fence to which they had retired from the heat, “I am again in your power, for I can neither flee nor resist.”

“The cause of America is dear to me as life,” said the trooper; “but she cannot require me to forget both gratitude and honour. Fly, unhappy man, while yet you are unseen by my men, or I cannot save you.”

“May God prosper you, and make you victorious over your enemies,” cried Birch, grasping the hand of the dragoon with an iron strength that his meagre figure did not indicate.

“Hold!” said Lawton; “but a word—are you what you seem?—can you—are you—”

“A royal spy,” interrupted Birch, averting his face, and endeavouring to release his hand.

“Then go, miserable wretch,” said the

trooper, relinquishing his grasp; "either avarice or delusion has lead a noble heart astray."

The bright light from the flames reached to a great distance around what was left of the building; but the words were hardly passed the lips of Lawton, before the gaunt form of the pedlar had glided over the visible space, and plunged into the darkness beyond, which was rendered more gloomy by the contrast.

The eye of Lawton rested for a moment on the spot where he had last seen this inexplicable man; and then, turning to the yet insensible Sarah, he lifted her in his arms, and bore her like a sleeping infant to the care of her friends.

CHAPTER XII.

“ And now her charms are fading fast,
Her spirits now no more are gay ;
Alas ! that beauty cannot last !
That flowers so sweet, so soon decay !
How sad appears
The vale of years,
How chang'd from youth's too-flattering scene !
Where are her fond admirers gone ?
Alas ! and shall there then be none
On whom her soul may lean ? ”

Cynthia's Grave.

THE torrent and the blast can mar the loveliest scenes in nature ; war, with his ruthless hand, may rival the elements in their work of destruction ; but it is passion alone that can lay waste the human heart. The whirlwind and the flood have duration in their existence, and have bounds to their fury ; the earth recovers from the devastation of the conflict with a fertility

that seems enriched by the blood of its victims: but there are feelings that no human agency can limit; and mental wounds that surpass the art of man to heal.

For some years, Sarah Wharton had indulged in contemplations on the person and character of Wellmere, that were natural to her sex and situation; and now, when these transient recollections were become permanent from security, and she looked forward to the moment that she was to take the most momentous step of her life, with that engrossing passion which marks a woman's love, the discovery of his real character was a blow too heavy for her faculties to bear. It has already been seen, that her first indications of returning life were unaccompanied by a consciousness of what had so recently occurred; nor did her friends, on receiving her from the arms of the trooper, recover more than the lovely image of her whom they had once known.

The walls of the cottage were all that was left of the building; and these, black-

ened by smoke, and stripped of their piazzas and ornaments, served only as dreary memorials of the peaceful contentment and security that had so lately reigned within. The roof, together with the rest of the wood-work, had tumbled into the cellars, and a pale and flitting light, ascending from their embers, shone faintly through the windows on objects in the lawn. The early flight of the Skinners left the dragoons at liberty to exert themselves in saving much of the furniture from the flames, and this lay scattered in heaps, giving the finishing touch of desolation to the scene. Whenever a stronger ray of light than common shot upwards, the composed figures of Sergeant Hollister and his associates, sitting on their horses in rigid discipline, were to be seen in the background of the picture, together with the beast of Mrs. Flanagan, that, having slipt its bridle, was quietly grazing by the highway. Betty herself had advanced to where the sergeant was posted, and, with an incredible degree of composure, witnessed the whole

of the events as they occurred. More than once she suggested to her companion the probability, as the fighting seemed to be over, that the proper time for plunder was arrived; but the veteran promptly acquainted her with his orders, and remained both inflexible and immoveable; until the washerwoman, noticing Lawton to come round the wing of the building with Sarah, ventured by herself among the warriors. The trooper, after placing Sarah on a sofa that had been hurled from the building by two of his men, retired with delicacy, that the ladies might succeed him in his care, and in order to reflect on what further was necessary to be done. Miss Peyton and her niece flew, with a rapture that was blessed with a momentary forgetfulness of all but her preservation, to receive Sarah from the trooper; but the vacant eye and flushed cheek, restored them instantly to their recollection.

“Sarah, my child, my beloved niece,” said the spinster, folding her in her arms, “you are saved, and may the blessing of

God await him who has been the instrument."

"See," said Sarah, gently pushing her aunt aside, and pointing to the glimmering ruins, "the windows are illuminated in honour of my arrival. They always receive a bride thus; he told me so; listen, and you will hear the bells."

"Here is no bride, no rejoicing, nothing but woe," cried Frances, in a manner but little less frantic than that of her sister; "Oh! may Heaven restore you, my sister, to us—to yourself."

"Peace, foolish young woman," said Sarah, with a smile of affected pity; "all cannot be happy at the same moment; perhaps you have no brother, or no husband, to console you; you look beautiful, and will yet find one, but," she continued, dropping her voice to a whisper, "see that he has no other wife; 'tis dreadful to think what might happen should he be twice married."

"The shock has destroyed her mind," said Miss Peyton, shaking with apprehen-

sion, and clasping her hands in agony ;
 “ my child, my beauteous Sarah, is a
 maniac.”

“ No, no, no,” cried Frances ; “ it is
 fever—she is light-headed—she must re-
 cover—she shall recover.”

The aunt caught joyfully at the hope
 conveyed in this suggestion, and despatched
 Katy to request the immediate aid and ad-
 vice of Dr. Sitgreaves. The operator was
 found enquiring among the men for pro-
 fessional employment, and inquisitively ex-
 amining every bruise and scratch that he
 could induce the sturdy warriors to ac-
 knowledge they had received. A summons
 of the sort conveyed by Katy was instantly
 obeyed, and not a minute elapsed before
 he was by the side of Miss Peyton.

“ This is a melancholy termination to so
 joyful a commencement of the night, ma-
 dam,” he observed, with a soothing man-
 ner ; “ but war must bring its attendant
 miseries, though doubtless it often sup-
 ports the cause of liberty, and improves
 the knowledge of surgical science.”

Miss Peyton could make no reply, but pointed to her niece in agony.

“’Tis fever,” answered Frances; “see, how glassy is her eye; and look at her cheek, how flushed.”

The surgeon stood for a moment deeply studying the outward symptoms of his patient, and then silently took her hand into his own. It was seldom that the hard and abstracted features of the operator discovered any violent emotion; all his passions seemed schooled to the most classical dignity, and his countenance did not often betray what his heart so frequently felt. In the present instance, however, the eager gaze of the aunt and sister soon detected the emotions of Sitgreaves. After laying his fingers for a minute on the beautiful arm, which, bared to the elbow, and glittering with jewels, Sarah suffered him to retain, he dropped it with a heavy sigh, and, dashing his hand over his eyes, turned sorrowfully to Miss Peyton as he said—

“Here is no fever to excite—’tis a case, my dear madam, for time and care only;

these, with the blessing of God, may effect a cure."

"And where is the wretch who has caused this ruin," exclaimed Singleton, rejecting the support of his man, and making an effort to rise from the chair where the care of his sister had placed him. "It is in vain that we overcome our enemies, if conquered they can still inflict such wounds as this."

"Dost think, foolish boy," said Lawton, with a bitter smile, "that hearts can feel in a colony? What is America but a satellite of England; to move as she moves, follow where she wists, and shine that the mother-country may become more splendid by her radiance. Surely you forget that it is honour enough for a colonist to receive ruin from the hand of a child of Britain."

"I forget not that I wear a sword," said Singleton, falling back exhausted; "but was there no willing arm ready to avenge that lovely sufferer—to appease the wrongs of this hoary father."

“Neither arms nor hearts are wanting, sir, in such a cause,” said the trooper fiercely; “but chance oftentimes helps the wicked. By heavens, I’d give Roanoke himself for a clear field with the miscreant.”

“Nay! captain, dear, no be parting with the horse, any way,” said Betty, with a significant look; “it is no trifle that can be had by jist asking, and the baste is sure of foot, and jumps like a squirrel.”

“Woman!” cried Lawton, “fifty horses, aye, the best that were ever reared on the banks of the Potomac would be but a paltry price for one blow at such a villain.”

“Come,” said the surgeon, “the night-air can do no service to George, or these ladies, and it is incumbent on us to remove them where they can find surgical attendance and refreshment. Here is nothing but smoking ruins and the miasma of the swamps.”

To this rational proposition no objection could be raised, and the necessary orders

were issued by Lawton to remove the whole party to the Four Corners.

America furnished but few and very indifferent carriage-makers at the period of which we write, and every vehicle that in the least aspired to the dignity of patrician notice, was the manufacture of a London mechanic. When Mr. Wharton left the city, he was one of the very few that maintained the state of a carriage in his establishment; and at the time that Miss Peyton and his daughters joined him in his retirement, they had been conveyed to the cottage in the heavy chariot that had once so imposingly rolled through the windings of Queen Street, or emerged with sombre dignity into the more spacious drive of Broadway. This vehicle stood undisturbed where it had been placed on its arrival, and the ages of the horses had alone protected the favourites of Cæsar from sequestration, by the contending forces in their neighbourhood. With a heavy heart the black, assisted by a few of the dragoons, proceeded to prepare it for the reception of

the ladies. It was a cumbrous vehicle, whose faded linings and tarnished ham-mercloth, together with its pannels of changing colour, denoted the want of that art which had once given it lustre and beauty. The "lion couchant" of the Wharton arms was reposing on the reviving splendor of a blazonry that told the armorial bearings of a prince of the church, and the mitre, that already began to shine through its American mask, was a symbol of the rank of its original owner. The chaise which conveyed Miss Singleton was also safe ; for the stables and out-buildings had entirely escaped the flames. It certainly had been no part of the plan of the marauders to leave so well-appointed a stud behind them ; but the suddenness of the attack by Lawton, not only disconcerted their arrangement on this point, but on many others also. A guard was left on the ground, under the command of Hollister, who, having discovered that his enemy was of mortal mould, took his position with admirable coolness and no little skill, to

guard against surprise. He drew off his small party to such a distance from the ruins, that it was effectually concealed in the darkness; while at the same time the light continued sufficiently powerful to discover any one who might approach the lawn with an intent to plunder.

Satisfied with this judicious arrangement, Captain Lawton made his dispositions for the march. Miss Peyton and her two nieces, with Isabella, were placed in the chariot; while the cart of Mrs. Flanagan, being amply supplied with blankets and a bed, was honoured with the persons of Captain Singleton and his man. Dr. Sitgreaves took charge of the chaise and Mr. Wharton; and what became of the rest of the family during that eventful night is unknown; for Cæsar, alone, of the domestics was to be found, if we except the housekeeper. Having disposed of the whole party in this manner, Lawton gave the word to march. He remained himself for a few minutes alone on the lawn, secreting various pieces of plate and

other valuables, that he was fearful might tempt the cupidity of his own men; when perceiving nothing more that he conceived likely to overcome their honesty, he threw himself into the saddle, with the soldierly intention of bringing up the rear.

“Stop, stop,” cried a female voice; “will you leave me alone to be murdered; the spoon is melted, I believe, and I’ll have compensation, if there’s law or justice in the land.”

Lawton turned an inquiring eye in the direction of the sound, and perceived a female emerging from the ruins, loaded with an enormous bundle, that vied in size with the renowned pack of the pedlar.

“Who have we here?” said the trooper, “rising like a phoenix from the flames; oh! by the soul of Hippocrates, but it is the identical she-doctor of famous needle-reputation. Well, good woman, what means this outcry?”

“Outcry!” echoed Katy, panting for breath; “is it not disparagement enough to lose a silver spoon, but I must be left

alone in this dreary place to be robbed, and perhaps murdered? Harvey would not serve me so; when I lived with Harvey I was always treated with respect at least, if he was a little close with his secrets, and wasteful with his money."

"Then you once formed part of the household, madam, of Mr. Harvey Birch?"

"You may say I was the whole of his household," returned the other; "there was nobody but I and he, and the old gentleman; you didn't know the old gentleman, did you?"

"That happiness was denied me," said Lawton; "but how long did you live in the family of this Birch?"

"I disremember the precise time," said Katy; "but it must have been hard on upon nine years; but what better am I for it all?"

"Sure enough, I can see but little benefit that you have derived from the association truly. But is there not something odd in Mr. Birch?"

"Odd, indeed," replied Katy, lowering

her voice, and looking around her ; he was a wonderful disregardful man, and minded a guinea no more than I do a karnal of corn. But help me to some way of joining Miss Jeanette, and I will tell you prodigies of what Harvey has done first and last."

" You will !" exclaimed the trooper, musing ; " here, give me leave to feel your arm above the elbow—there—it is no small matter of bone that you have, I see." So saying, he gave the spinster a sudden whirl, that at once destroyed her philosophy of mind, and effectually confused all her faculties, until she found herself safely, if not comfortably, seated on the crupper of Lawton's steed.

" Now, madam, you have the consolation of knowing that you are as well mounted as heart can wish. The nag is sure of foot, and will leap like a panther."

" Let me get down," cried Katy, struggling to release herself from his iron grasp, and yet afraid of falling ; " this is no way to put a woman on a horse, besides, I can't ride without a pillion."

“Softly, good madam,” said Lawton; “for although Roanoke never falls before, he sometimes rises behind. He is far from being accustomed to a pair of heels beating upon his flanks like a drum-major on a field-day; a single touch of the spur will serve him for a fortnight; and it’s by no means wise to be kicking in this manner, for he is a horse that but little likes to be outdone.”

“Let me down, I say,” screamed Katy; “I shall fall, and be killed. Besides, I have nothing to hold on with; my arms are full, don’t you see?”

“True,” returned the trooper, observing that he had brought bundle and all from the ground; “I perceive that you belong to the baggage-guard; but my sword-belt will encircle your little waist as well as my own.”

Katy was too much pleased with this compliment to make any resistance, while he buckled her close to his own Herculean frame, and, driving a spur into his charger, they flew from the lawn with a rapidity

that defied further denial. After trotting on for some time, at a rate that discomposed the spinster vastly, they overtook the cart of the washerwoman, driving slowly over the stones, with a proper consideration for the wounds of Captain Singleton. The occurrences of that eventful night had produced an excitement in the young soldier, that was followed by the ordinary lassitude of re-action, and he lay carefully enveloped in blankets, and supported by his man, but little able to converse, though deeply brooding over the past. The dialogue between Lawton and his companion ceased with the commencement of their motions; but a foot-pace being more favourable to speech, the trooper began anew—

“Then you have been an inmate in the same house with Harvey Birch?”

“For more as nine years,” said Katy, drawing her breath, and rejoicing greatly that their speed was abated.

“The deep tones of the trooper’s voice were soon conveyed by the night-air to the

ears of the washerwoman ; and, turning her head, where she sat directing the movements of her mare, she heard both question and answer.

“ Belike then, good woman, yee’r knowing whether or no he’s a-kin to Beelzebub,” said Betty ; “ it’s Sargeant Hollister who’s saying the same, and no fool is the sargeant, any way.”

“ It’s a scandalous disparagement,” cried Katy, most vehemently ; “ there’s no kinder soul than Harvey that carries a pack ; and, for a gownd or a tidy apron, he will never take a King’s farthing from a friend. Belzebub, indeed ! For what would he read the Bible, if he had dealings with the evil spirit ?”

“ He’s an honest divil, any way, as I was saying before,” returned Betty ; “ the guinea was pure. But then the sargeant thinks him amiss, and it’s no want of larning that Mister Hollister has.”

“ He’s a fool,” said Katy, tartly. “ Harvey mought be a man of substance ; but he’s so disregardful. How often have I

told him, that if he did nothing but peddle, and would put his gains to use, and get married, so that things at home could be kept snug and tidy, and leave off his dealings with the rig'lars, and all sich incumberments, that he would soon be an excellent liver. Sergeant Hollister would be glad to hold a candle to him, I guess, indeed."

"Pooh!" said Betty, in her philosophical way; "yee'r no thinking that Mister Hollister is an officer, and stands next the cornet in the troop. But this pedlar gave warning of the brush, the night, and it's no sure that Captain Jack would have got the day, but for the reinforcement."

"How say you, Betty," cried the trooper, bending forward on his saddle; "had you notice of our danger from this said Birch?"

"The very same, darling; and it's hurry I was till the boys was in motion; not but I knew yee'r enough for the cow-boys, any time. But wi'd the divil on your side, I was sure of the day. I'm only wondering

there's so little plunder in a business of Beelzeboob's contriving."

"I'm obliged to you for the rescue," said Lawton, "and equally indebted to the motive."

"Is it the plunder? But little did I think of it, till I saw the moveables on the ground; some burnt and some broke, and other some as good as new. It would be convenient to have one feather-bed in the corps, any way."

"By heavens, 'twas timely succour. Had not Roanoke been swifter than their bullets, I must have fallen. The animal is worth his weight in gold."

"It's continental you mane, darling. Goold weighs heavy, and is no plenty in the States. If the nagur hadn't been staying and frightening the sargeant with his copper-coloured looks, and a matter of blarney 'bout ghosts, we should have been in time to have killed all the dogs, and taken the rest prisoners."

"It is very well as it is, Betty," said

Lawton; "a day will yet come, I trust, when these miscreants will be rewarded; if not in judgments upon their persons, at least in the opinions of their fellow-citizens. The time must arrive when America will learn to distinguish between a patriot and a robber."

"Speak low," said Katy; "there's some who think much of themselves that have doings with the skinners."

"It's more they are thinking of themselves then, than other people thinks of them," cried Betty; "a thief's a thief, any way, whether he stales for King George or for Congress."

"I knew that evil would soon happen," said Katy; "the sun set to-night behind a black cloud, and the house-dog whined, although I gave him his supper with my own hands; besides, it's not a week sin, I dreamed that dream about the thousand lighted candles, and the cakes being burnt in the oven. Miss Peyton said it was all because I had the tallow

melted to dip the next day, and a new baking set ; but I know'd better nor that from the beginning."

" Well," said Betty, " it's but little I drame any way ; jist keep an asy conscience and a plenty of the stuff in yee, and yee'l sleep like an infant. The last drame I had was when the boys put the thistle-tops in the blankets, and then I was thinking that Captain Jack's man was currying me down, for the matter of Roanoke : but it's no trifle I mind either in skin or stomach."

" I'm sure," said Katy, with a stiff erection, that drew Lawton back in his saddle, " no man should ever dare to lay hands on any bed of mine ; it's indecent and despicable conduct."

" Pooh ! pooh !" cried Betty ; " if you tag after a troop of horse, a small bit of a joke must be borne : what would become of the States and liberty, if the boys had never a clane shirt, or a drop to comfort them ? Ask Captain Jack there, if they'd

fight, Mrs. Beelzeboob, and they no clane linen to keep the victory in."

" I'm a single woman, and my name is Haynes," said Katy, " and I'd thank you to use no disparaging terms when speaking to me ; it's what I isn't used to, and Harvey is no more of Beelzebub nor yourself."

“ You must tolerate a little license in the tongue of Mrs. Flanagan, madam,” said the trooper ; “ the drop she speaks of is often of an extraordinary size, and then she has acquired the freedom of a soldier’s manner.”

“ Pooh ! captain, darling,” cried Betty, “ why do you bother the woman ; talk like yeerself, dear, and it’s no fool of a tongue that yee’ve got in yee’r own head. But it’s here away that the sargeant made a halt, thinking there might be more divils than one stirring the night. The clouds are as black as Arnold’s heart, and deuce the star is there a twinkling among them. Well, the mare is used to a march

after night-fall, and is smelling out the road like a pointer slut."

"It wants but little to the rising moon," observed the trooper. He called a dragoon, who was riding in advance, to him, gave a few orders and cautions relative to the comfort and safety of Singleton, and, speaking a consoling word to his friend himself, gave Roanoke the spur, and dashed by the cart at a rate that again put to flight all the philosophy of Katharine Haynes.

"Good luck to yee for a free rider and a bold," shouted the washerwoman as he passed; "if yee'r meeting Mister Beelzebub, jist back the basté up to him, and show him his consort that yee've got on the crupper. I'm thinking it's no long he'd tarry to chat. Well, well, it's his life that we saved, he was saying himself; though the plunder is nothing to signify."

The cries of Betty Flanagan were too familiar to the ears of Captain Lawton to cause any alteration in the gait of his steed, or to elicit a reply. Notwithstanding the

unusual burden that Roanoke sustained, he got over the ground with great rapidity ; and the distance between the cart of Mrs. Flanagan and the chariot of Miss Peyton was passed in a manner that, however it answered the intentions of the trooper, in no degree contributed to the comfort of his companion. The meeting occurred but a short distance from the quarters of Lawton, and at the same instant the moon broke from behind a mass of clouds that hovered over the horizon, and threw a light upon objects that seemed paler than usual after the glaring brightness of the conflagration. There is, however, a sweetness in moonlight that no competition of art can equal ; and Lawton checked his horse, and mused in silence for the remainder of the ride.

Compared with the simple elegance and substantial comfort of the Locusts, the " Hotel Flanagan " presented but a dreary spectacle. In the place of carpeted floors and curtained windows, were the yawning cracks of a rudely constructed dwell-

ing, and boards and paper were ingeniously applied to supply the place of the green glass in more than half the lights. The care of Lawton had anticipated every improvement that their situation would allow, and blazing fires were made before the party arrived, to cheer as much as possible the desolation within. The dragoons, who had been charged with this duty, conveyed a few necessary articles of furniture, and Miss Peyton and her companions, on alighting, found something like habitable apartments prepared for their reception. The mind of Sarah had continued to wander during the ride, and, with the pliability of insanity, she accommodated every circumstance to the feelings that were uppermost in her own bosom. It was necessary to support her to the room intended for the ladies; but the instant she was placed on the seat where her sister sat, she passed an arm affectionately around the waist of Frances, and pointing slowly with the other, said, in an under tone,

“ See, this is the palace of his father ;

here is the light of a thousand torches ; but no bridegroom. Oh ! never, never wed without a ring—a prepared ring ; and be wary lest another has a right to it. Poor little girl, how you tremble ! but you are safe ; there never can be two bridegrooms for more than one bride. Oh !—no—no—no—do not tremble, do not weep, you are safe.”

“ It is impossible to minister to a mind that has sustained such a blow,” said the trooper, who was compassionately regarding the ruin, to Isabella Singleton ; “ time and God’s mercy can alone avail her ; but something more may be done towards the bodily comfort of you all. You are a soldier’s daughter, and used to scenes like this ; help me to exclude some of the cold air from these windows.”

Miss Singleton promptly acceded to his request ; and while Lawton was endeavouring from without to remedy the defect of broken panes, Isabella was arranging a substitute for a curtain within.

“ I hear the cart,” said the trooper, in

reply to one of her interrogatories. "Betty is tender-hearted in the main; believe me, poor George will not only be safe, but comfortable."

"God bless her for her care, and bless you all," said Isabella, fervently. "Dr. Sitgreaves has gone down the road to meet him, I know: but what is that glittering in the moon-beams?"

Directly opposite to the window where they stood, were the out-buildings of the farm, and the quick eye of Lawton caught at a glance the object to which she alluded.

"'Tis the glare of fire-arms," said the trooper, springing from the window towards his charger, who yet remained caparisoned at the door. His movement was quick as thought; but a flash of fire was followed by the whistling of a bullet, before he had proceeded a step. A loud shriek burst from the dwelling, and the captain sprang into his saddle: the whole was the business of but a moment.

"Mount, mount, and follow!" shouted the trooper; and before his astonished men could understand the cause of alarm,

Roanoke had carried him in safety over the fence which intervened between him and his foe. The chase was for life and death; but the distance to the rocks was again too short, and the disappointed trooper saw his intended victim vanish in their clefts, where he could not follow.

“By the life of Washington,” muttered Lawton, as he sheathed his sabre, “I would have made two halves of him, had he not been so nimble on the foot; but a time will come.” So saying he returned to his quarters with the indifference of a man who knew his life was at any moment to be offered a sacrifice to his country. An extraordinary tumult in the house induced him to quicken his speed, and, on arriving at the door, the panic-stricken Katy informed him, that the bullet aimed at his own life had taken effect in the bosom of Miss Singleton.

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